DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 450 165 UD 033 984

AUTHOR Walker, Karen E.; Grossman, Jean Baldwin; Raley, Rebecca

TITLE Extended Service Schools: Putting Programming in Place.

INSTITUTION Manpower Demonstration Research Corp., New York, NY.; Public/Private Ventures, Philadelphia, PA.

PUB DATE 2000-12-00
NOTE 85p.; With Veronica Fellerath and Glee I. Holton.
AVAILABLE FROM Public/Private Ventures, One Commerce Square, 2005 Market Street, Suite 900, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Tel: 215-557-4400; Fax: 215-557-4469. For full text: http://www.ppv.org.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *After School Programs; *Community Schools; Elementary Secondary Education; *Extended School Day; Governance; Minority Groups; Needs Assessment; Poverty; Program Development; Program Evaluation; *School Community Programs; Student Participation

ABSTRACT

This paper describes a multi-year evaluation of the Extended-Service Schools (ESS) Adaptation Initiative, sharing what has been learned about opening up schools and initiating collaborative school-based programs in poor communities during hours that school is not in session. The ESS included four unique school-community collaborative models. This report discusses how cities began the process of opening up schools to children, youth, and adults and examines how these programs affect the lives of their participants. The first half of the report describes early implementation experiences, looking at the model types, the cities involved in the initiative, and the conditions of the schools selected to implement the program. The next chapters: lay out the types of activities and services that have been put in place; describe the students recruited and enrolled in the programs; consider challenges faced by most programs and how the coordinators have reacted to the challenges; and examine how the programs became operational (types of collaborative structure each city used in planning and early implementation, how cities planned and financed their programs, and management and governance). (Contains 13 references.) (SM)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original document.

ED 450 165

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

H. Sherman
Public/Private Ventures

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Extended Service Schools
Putting Programming in Place

Karen E. Walker
Jean Baldwin Grossman
Rebecca Raley

with
Veronica Fellerath
Glee I. Holton

P/PV MDRC

UD033984

Extended Service Schools
Putting Programming in Place

December 2000

Karen E. Walker
Jean Baldwin Grossman
Rebecca Raley

with
Veronica Fellerath
Glee I. Holton

P/PV MDRC

I. Introduction

After-school programs are not new. Organizations like the Ys, Boys & Girls Clubs, 4-H, Campfire Girls, and Boys and Girls Incorporated have been providing enriching opportunities for children and youth in the after-school hours for years. But unfortunately too many poor youth do not have access to these facilities because there are none located in their neighborhoods, parents are concerned about their children's safety getting to and from the organizations, or they cannot afford the program's fees. In contrast, all young people have access to schools. Many are located in youth's neighborhoods and, for the most part, parents are familiar with the schools and comfortable sending their children to them. In addition, school buildings have enormous untapped potential as facilities for meeting the educational, developmental and recreational needs of youth and families in neighborhoods across the United States. Schools typically have gyms, libraries, auditoriums, art rooms and other spaces appropriate for a range of activities. The formal school day is short, approximately seven hours, leaving hours a day when schools are potentially available. School-based youth programs would therefore seem to be a powerful addition to the country's existing system of community-based programs for children and youth.

Recognizing that school buildings offer important resources, a movement to open up the schools has exploded, taking root in a number of cities. The largest city-funded, school-based youth program in the United States is the New York City Beacon Initiative, begun in 1991 with city funds. There are now 80 elementary and middle schools in New York City that have Beacon Centers. The San Francisco Beacon Initiative began implementation in 1997 and currently operates in eight city schools. Boston has another large, city-funded initiative, as does Los Angeles. Along with these extensive city-funded efforts, the federal government began the 21st Century Community Learning Center Program in 1996 with one million dollars. For fiscal year 2000, the government allocated $450 million to the program; cities of all sizes have eagerly applied for the funds, which are used to support educational and other enrichment activities after school.

The movement to locate programs for children and youth in schools during the nonschool hours is more than just an attempt to take advantage of schools' facilities; it also aims to build a new kind of institution—one that uses school facilities and unites school

personnel with staff from community-based organizations and local residents to create vital centers of activity and service for children, youth and their families in the nonschool hours. Throughout this report, for simplicity, we refer to these programs as after-school programs. However, as will be seen in Chapter 3, many of the school/community collaboratives we are investigating deliver more than just after-school services, and all attempt to involve more than just children.

Despite the growing popularity of these school-based programs, little is known about how to implement them in school buildings, who will be attracted to school-based programs, and what effects participation may have on the children and youth. Building a new institution is a time-consuming process and, as more communities undertake the effort, they will likely face many of the same questions, challenges and hurdles encountered by communities that have already begun the process. As a result, it is crucial that there be information available that identifies effective strategies for implementing programs and overcoming common challenges, and that shapes expectations for programs. What is possible in programs? How long does it take for one to become fully operational? What changes can we expect to see in youth as a result of these programs?

The multi-year evaluation of the Extended-Service Schools Adaptation Initiative, described briefly below, is currently under way to answer these questions. While the project and evaluation are on-going, we felt it was important to share early learnings that have already been gained over the planning phase and first full year of program implementation. Many communities and schools wish to start similar programs and could benefit from learning:

- What it takes to get a community-oriented school-based youth program on the ground, and
- What early challenges can they expect and how have others dealt with them?

Other communities are dealing with many of the issues that have arisen in the ESS sites. Thus, to meet the demand for information, this interim report shares with policymakers and practitioners what has been learned about opening up schools and initiating collaborative school-based programs during the hours that school is not in session.

The Extended-Service Schools Adaptation Initiative

For the past decade, the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds have focused their work on improving the quality of educational and developmental services available to children living in poor communities. One of several creative approaches the Funds decided to explore systematically was school/community collaboration. Therefore, when they set out in the mid-1990s to explore collaborations that open public schools during the nonschool hours to children and community groups, The Funds commissioned a paper by Joy Dryfoos to cast a broad net to identify promising approaches that differed with respect to management structures and program goals. Several models surfaced as strong and potentially adaptable nationwide. The New York Beacon Initiative provides a model of a partnership in which a community-based organization runs after-school programs in the public schools. It had substantial public support and funding, and was expanding quickly in New York City's middle schools. Another model of community-school collaboration that began in New York is the highly integrated service and educational collaborative formed by the Children's Aid Society and the school district in Washington Heights. This model, called Community Schools, requires more radical change on the part of schools than does the Beacon model because, in theory, it encourages shared school/program management with community-based organizations and aims to include programming during and after the school day. In Philadelphia, the West Philadelphia Improvement Corporation (WEPIC), spearheaded by the University of Pennsylvania, provides a third model—one that links universities and schools in reciprocally beneficial learning experiences. Lastly, perceiving the potential for sustainability in a United Way school/community collaboration, The Funds encouraged the United Way of America (UW of A) to identify a viable school/community model. It identified Bridges to Success in Indianapolis as a way that local agencies could collaborate with schools. The Funds then encouraged the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) to work with UW of A since IEL had a long history of direct involvement in education.

Several of these models are being evaluated; thus, there was no need for The Funds to duplicate model-specific evaluations. On the other hand, an initiative that includes multiple models could be generated to address many interesting unanswered questions. Would all

models work equally well in all cities? Are any of the four models more effective in certain areas than are other models? One model, for example, might include structures and features that make it more effective for generating and sustaining adult resident involvement, while a second model might be more open to youth participation in implementation decisions. An initiative with multiple models would also be able to address whether some models are more easily implemented in certain situations. What aspects of cities' situations led them to adapt the models? How did each model—each with its distinctive organizational structure and programmatic features—address the particular social, cultural and political contexts of individual communities. To address these important cross-cutting issues, the Funds constructed the Extended-Service Schools (ESS) Adaptation Initiative composed of these four school/community collaborative models—the Beacon model, Community Schools, WEPIC and Bridges to Success.

ESS's design intentionally embodies both model variation and city-level variation. This variation enables the initiative and its accompanying evaluation to examine how to implement after-school collaborations in very different contexts and to learn about the general issues involved in providing opportunities to youth in their nonschool time. Understanding how and why cities modified the programs to fit their situations will also be useful to other cities considering similar school/community collaborations.[1] The variation permits the evaluation to distinguish among the opportunities, challenges and effects presented by dimensions of the program (such as the location or the governance structure) and the environment (such as being located in an elementary or high school). Because communities contemplating new school/community collaborations will adopt and tailor pre-existing models to best suit their situations, it is important to understand how programmatic and environmental dimensions influence adaptation.

Focusing the initiative and its evaluation on the adaptation process and understanding broad general lessons about after-school programs and school/community collaborations is unique. The ESS evaluation provides us with an opportunity to examine how program strategies from a variety of models adapt to new environments. It provides the opportunity to explore in detail the choices that communities face as they plan their initiatives, the inevitable trade-offs and negotiations that ensue, and how local opportunities and constraints shape local initiatives. Throughout the evaluation, we will focus on what aspects of the adaptation process or other findings appear to be generic and which seem more model-specific.

All four models offer school-based services and youth development activities to children living in poor communities during nonschool hours and thus can all be labeled after-school programs. The model adaptations in the ESS cities provide opportunities to learn about after-school programming. However, all four models have much broader goals. All of them aim to fundamentally change the way the school and the community interact, making the interaction much more collaborative. Thus, in addition to affording us the opportunity to learn about after-school programs, the ESS initiative will generate findings about school/community collaboration. In sum, the ESS initiative and its evaluation are intended to provide practitioners, funders and policymakers in local communities with a richer set of lessons about how local school-based collaborations unfold than could be obtained from either an evaluation of a single after-school program or a single school/community collaboration.

The next section briefly lays out the design of the ESS evaluation. The chapter ends with a discussion of the report's goals and organization.

Evaluation Design and this Report

After reviewing existing research and ongoing evaluations, five key areas were identified as priorities for the ESS evaluation: understanding the community-level planning and leadership needed to launch and maintain these collaborations; examining the factors that contribute to successful program implementation and quality service; describing youth's participation patterns and their relationship to youth's program experiences; determining the programs' per-student cost; and exploring programs' financing strategies. The diversity embodied in the initiative provides a rich, yet daunting, source of information on these issues.

We designed the four-year evaluation to provide us with both an understanding of the breadth of programming experience and the ability to delve more deeply into particular issues. To learn about the range of programming experiences in all cities, program operators are asked to fill out annual organizational surveys

describing the general contours of their programs, their cost and particular themes that emerge over time. To explore implementation issues more deeply, we are conducting inperson visits to 10 cities (at least two cities per model). The experiences of all the programs in those 10 cities are being followed. Youth's participation and experiences are being tracked in six of the 10 cities whose program staff were willing and able to undertake the data-collection tasks necessary for the evaluation. We refer to these six cities as the intensive research cities.

The ESS evaluation is currently scheduled to end in early 2002. However, the need for information grows as more communities undertake to establish after-school programs and/or school/community collaborations. Thus, we wrote this report covering what was learned about the planning process and what happened in the programs during their first full year of implementation.[2]

Most of the information used for this report came from our verbatim site visit notes. We visited the 10 implementation cities, most twice, from late 1998 to late 1999. During the visits, research staff conducted interviews with program staff, activity providers, leaders in the efforts to implement the initiative, local funders and school district personnel. In addition, during the second round of visits, we observed activities for youth. To put the detailed information from the implementation cities into perspective, we attempted to obtain data from all 17 cities through the organizational surveys. Approximately three-quarters of school coordinators (or 45) responded to the survey. Data collection on youth's participation patterns and their experiences has just begun. However, early enrollment data were available for some of the schools in five of the cities. Cost and financing information were collected from the organizational surveys, though few cities provided information on all program costs.

This report draws on all these data to address two sets of questions. The first set relates to what the programs achieved within the first year:

- What type of activities were put in place? Who were attracted and recruited into these new programs?
- How were the programs managed? How were activities provided?
- What were the common early implementation challenges facing the programs?

The second set of questions relates to what it takes to launch these types of school/community initiatives:

- Who participated in the collaborative process?
- What factors influenced the success of city-level collaborative efforts?
- How were the schools chosen? Who determined the early program's content? How did programs finance their early implementation period?
- How did management authority devolve to the school-level?

Organization of the Report

This report discusses how cities *begin* the process of opening up schools to children, youth and adults: we examine the cities' planning and piloting efforts and continue through their first year of implementation. The next report will address the question of how these programs affect the lives of their participants. New programs take time to establish themselves. Not only do entire program infrastructures need to be put in place—new staff hired and trained, management and reporting structures determined, activity providers located and engaged—but the programs must advertise themselves; establish a reputation among students, parents and volunteers; and recruit participants. They must learn to adapt to the school and their local environments, build key relationships and weed out unreliable providers. Despite the enormity of the tasks facing them, the first-year performance of the ESS programs was impressive. They got on the ground quickly. They engaged a very committed group of staff and partners. Many of the activities we observed were quite innovative. And all attracted many students.

These achievements did not come about effortlessly, though. In order to deepen the field's understanding of what it takes to establish these school/community collaborations and help others who are thinking of following suit, this report focuses on the challenges the ESS cities faced during this early period. Thus, this report should not be read as an assessment of the program's potential but rather more as a discussion about the strategies cities used to start dealing with the inherent complexities of operating in a school system. As

we will mention at the end of the report, several of the challenges cities encountered during the early part of the initiative were overcome later; but since other new initiatives are likely to run into similar issues, it is instructive to discuss them.

To highlight what the programs were able to accomplish over the first year, the first half of the report describes their early implementation experiences instead of starting with the planning period. Before discussing the experiences of the programs, we describe, in Chapter II, the model types, the cities involved in the initiative and the conditions of the schools that were selected to implement the programs. Chapter III lays out the types of activities and services that have been put in place, while Chapter IV describes the students who enrolled in the program and how they were recruited. Chapter V considers the challenges faced by most of the programs and how the coordinators have reacted. In Chapters VI through VIII, we turn to examining how these programs became operational: Chapter VI describes the types of collaborative structure each city used in the planning and early implementation periods and why; Chapter VII discusses how the cities planned and financed their programs; and Chapter VIII examines management and governance. We conclude by discussing our findings' for implications using schools as a venue for after-school programs and for the potential of these programs to achieve their goals.

II. The Models, the Cities and the Schools

Many of the analyses in this report examine whether and how model differences affect implementation. As we ultimately conclude, differences due to model differences are modest during this early phase of implementation. Nonetheless, there are differences in decision-making structures and organizational partnerships among the cities that arose early in the initiative. In this chapter, we describe key characteristics of the models, as well as the cities and schools in which the initiative was implemented.

The Models

Specific attributes of the models were defined by the national intermediaries that worked with the original models' sites. Below we present those attributes; the text discusses the differences—both qualitative and quantitative—among the models, while the boxes outline prototypical attributes of each model. In practice, of course, both the original model sites and the national adaptation cities vary from the descriptive information published by the intermediaries. Nonetheless, prototypical descriptions are useful for delineating different visions and the strategies taken to achieve them.

Mission

As the brief individual descriptions of the models indicate, they vary significantly with respect to their formal missions: while the Bridges to Success model aims to better link families and schools in order to increase students' academic achievements by better serving their non-educational needs, the Community Schools model aims for no less than school transformation. The WEPIC model hopes to improve schools through curricular changes and additional human resources, in the form of university students and faculty. The Beacon model hopes to provide school-based safe havens for youth in the nonschool hours, and to do so on a large scale within cities.

Differences in the missions of the models have implications for the ways the adaptation cities approach their work. WEPIC and Community Schools work intensively with school administrators to design activities responsive to the schools' needs. These models often attempt to integrate school and nonschool learning activities. Thus, an after-school enrichment activity such as building models of students' dream homes will explicitly attempt to improve students' math skills. Neither model focuses exclusively on programming in

Beacon

National Intermediary: Youth Development Institute at the Fund for the City of New York.

Original Model Sites: New York City Public Schools, primarily middle schools.

Mission: To develop and operate school-based community centers; to create "safe havens" for youth and families in poor neighborhoods; to promote youth development and resiliency.

Activities: A diverse array of youth development activities in five core areas: education, recreation and enrichment, career development, leadership development and health. Activities take place during nonschool hours and emphasize several factors important to youth resiliency: caring adult relationships; engaging activities; high expectations; opportunity to make a contribution; and continuity.

Governance: Each Beacon Center has a lead agency that manages all activities at the school. A local organization provides technical assistance in organizational development as well as youth development practices. An over-sight committee, consisting of executive staff from key CBOs and school district staff, provide general policy and management oversight. Each school has a school-level decision-making body that includes parents and other community representation.

the nonschool hours, including after-school and in the summer, though all schools in the WEPIC and Community School cities have after-school programs. Some programs in these two models may take place during the school day, blurring the distinction between the community agencies and the school.

In contrast, the Beacon model is designed to create school-based *community* centers within the schools. There is less attention paid to integrating activities into the school day in the Beacon literature. Instead, the model focuses explicitly on the nonschool hours, enabling them to work with school staff—not possible for programs operating during the day.

Governance

In developing its requirements for the National Adaptation, the designers addressed the need for cities to identify funding sources to sustain the initiative beyond the three-year grant period. As a result, one of the requirements for the planning proposals was that the cities develop partnerships among key youth-serving organizations and stakeholders such as funders, school systems, community-based organizations and parents. In addition, the grant requirements noted that decision-making should be shared with those served by the initiative, namely youth and their families.

Within the guidelines, the models differ significantly in how they developed decision-making structures, both with respect to who was included in decision-making and the kinds of decision-making bodies that existed. The Community Schools model perhaps has the "tightest" decision-making structure, consisting of a principal, the Community School director, a representative from a local university and an executive of a community-based organization (which employs the director). The model also incorporates parents and

Community Schools

Original Model Sites: PS 5 & PS 8; IS 218 and IS 90 in the Washington Heights section of New York City.

National Intermediary: Children's Aid Society, NY, and the National Center for Communities and Schools at Fordham University.

Mission: "Educational excellence, combined with needed human services, delivered through school, parent and community partnerships."
"Seamless integration of school-day activities with extended-day programs."

Activities: A wide range of youth development programs during the school day and in non-school hours. Social services, such as on-site clinics, legal assistance, and case management are also provided. Parent education is an important component of the Community Schools.

Governance: Co-management of school facilities by the school and a community-based organization. To this end, management staff from the CBO have space in the school administrative offices so they can interact frequently with school principals.

Additional characteristics of the National Adaptation: Local universities play a key role in technical assistance and planning. An oversight committee, consisting of university staff, executive staff from key CBOs, and school district staff, provide general policy and management oversight. In addition, each school should have a school-level decision-making body that includes parents and other community representation.

West Philadelphia Improvement Corporation (WEPIC)

Original Model Sites: Turner Elementary School in West Philadelphia.

National Intermediary: Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania.

Mission: A school-based school and community revitalization program to produce comprehensive, university-assisted community schools that serve, educate and activate all members of the community, revitalizing the curriculum through a community-oriented, real-world, problem-solving approach.

Activities: Academically based community service, such as graduate and undergraduate interns working in schools to provide educational assistance and mentoring to youth.

Governance: School principals and staff play key decision-making roles, such as deciding what substantive areas will be addressed through the initiative. Community councils provide guidance on program content.

other community members in a school-level advisory group. The executive group is expected to cooperate extensively—indeed the tight integration of social services and enrichment activities both during the school day and in the nonschool hours would be impossible if the group did not cooperate. The small team-management structure is possible—as we shall see in Chapter VIII—because single schools are involved in the local initiatives.

The Beacon and Bridges to Success models share some governance features, but there are also key differences. In both models, programs are being implemented in three or more schools within the adaptation cities. As a result, the models include city-wide oversight committees, consisting of school district personnel, personnel from governmental agencies and offices, and executive staff from CBOs. The oversight committee is expected to set policy guidelines for all schools in the local initiative and work on identifying funds for future sustainability. Also, in both Beacon and Bridges to Success, cities are expected to convene school-level councils, including community parents, to help make local decisions. The two models differ in their approach to direct management of programs at the schools. The Beacon model identifies a lead agency to oversee programming at each school site. The lead agency is accountable to a lead organization, which manages grants to all the CBOs managing school sites in the city. In addition, the lead organization or a second organization provides local technical assistance to the school sites. The Bridges to Success model employs school coordinators (hired by the United Way, the school or the agency) who may work with multiple schools and make decisions in conjunction with the school-based council.

WEPIC is the least easily characterized, and variations from the prototype are significant. The model relies on substantial contributions of time by university faculty and undergraduate and graduate students. University faculty often become part of a school-level management or advisory group, which may consist of a school

Bridges to Success

Original Model Site: Indianapolis, Indiana.

National Intermediaries: United Way of America and the Institute for Educational Leadership.

Mission: To increase the educational success of students by better meeting the noneducational needs of children and their families through a partnership of education, human and community service delivery systems, with a long-range vision of establishing schools as "life-long learning centers" and focal points of their communities.

Activities: Vary according to site, but each site has an overarching goal of promoting positive youth development during nonschool hours. Activities include educational enrichment, career development, arts and culture, "life-skills," counseling, case management, health and mental health services, and recreation.

Governance: The Local United Way agency acts as lead organization and fiscal agent. A local governance structure made up of United Way, school district, social service and community representatives develops city-wide programming strategies and oversees implementation. School-level councils assess the needs and assets of the community, and design and implement program interventions. The councils include a program coordinator, school principal and other school staff, parents, students and local partners.

Table 2.1
The Cities Involved in the ESS Model Adaptations and the Number of Schools in Each City

Beacon	Bridges to Success	Community Schools	WEPIC
*Denver, CO (3)	*Central Falls, RI (3)	*Boston, MA (1)	Albuquerque, NM (1)
*Minneapolis, MN (5)	Guilford County and Highpoint, NC (2)	*Long Beach, CA (1)	*Atlanta, GA (1)
Oakland, CA (4)	Flint, MI (3)	Salt Lake City, UT (1)	*Aurora, CO (1)
*Savannah, GA (3)	*Jacksonville, FL (5)		Denver, CO (1)
	Mesa, AZ (5)		
	*Missoula, MT (5)		

*Indicate cities to which research visits were made

coordinator, faculty and the school's principal. Principals play key decision-making roles in schools.

Programs and Activities

Programs and activities vary significantly across the models. All were directed to promote positive youth development, which the Funds defined as activities that foster the ongoing growth process in which all youth endeavor to meet their basic needs for safety, caring relationships and connections to the larger community, and to acquire academic, vocational, personal and social skills. The approach builds on the strengths of young people and recognizes their needs for ongoing support and challenging opportunities. The definition is sufficiently broad to encompass a huge variety of activities, as noted above. The Beacon and the Bridges to Success models focus on activities conducted during the nonschool hours. The Beacon model identifies five core developmental areas: education, recreation and enrichment, career development, leadership development and health. The Bridges to Success model includes all those plus case management and counseling.

The Community Schools and WEPIC models have very diverse sets of activities across the cities, and do not focus exclusively on youth development. While activities in both models may include after-school and summer programs, they may also include programs that occur during the school day. Thus, a Community School might have a parent center that is open during school hours. There might be extensive case management and counseling available to children and their families. WEPIC may include the implementation of professional development classes for teachers or the development of project-based classes or community service projects for students in the school, using the resources of the university.

The Cities

To examine how extended-service schools could be adapted to a variety of environments, the ESS National Adaptation was implemented in 17 cities, both large and small. Among the largest cities in the initiative are Philadelphia, Minneapolis and Denver; among the smallest are Central Falls, Rhode Island (with 18,000 residents) and Missoula, Montana (with 83,000 residents). Size, however, is only one dimension that differentiates the cities. Other dimensions are equally, if not more, important to the implementation of the initiative. Local political, service and funding environments play an important role in how local initiatives unfold, as we shall demonstrate throughout the report. Below, we list some of the dimensions that have proved to be important, along with descriptions of the variations across cities. But first, Table 2.1 lists the cities implementing each model and the number of schools involved in the adaptation in each city. Of the 17 cities listed, researchers visited the 10 whose names in the table are preceded by an asterisk. Since contextual information is thus available only for those 10 cities, the discussions that follow are based on them.

Local Collaborations

There are a number of ways in which local context either facilitates or impedes implementation of the local efforts. Among the most important is the existence of previous collaborations, which shaped, eased or challenged how the local ESS collaborations were formed. While most cities had participated in previous collaborations (it was one of the factors taken into consideration during city selection), the scope and content of those collaborations varied. Missoula, a Bridges to Success city, for instance, has a pre-existing collaboration whose goals are very similar to the ESS initiative's. In addition, key stakeholders in Missoula suggested the existence of an organizational culture that supports the collaborations. In Savannah, while there are very important pre-existing collaborations among youth-serving organizations, for historical reasons the school system is not an active partner. For the Savannah ESS initiative, the fiscal agency worked hard to negotiate a collaboration that included the schools.

In the current funding climate, in which both philanthropic and government funders encourage organizations to collaborate, many cities have recent experience forming and operating collaborations. However, others may not. Being able to identify the kinds of negotiation that the ESS cities underwent to forge their ESS collaborations and, in one instance, looking at the development of a collaboration where none previously existed, provides important information about the process of forging collaborations. Chapter VI discusses the importance of pre-existing collaborations in detail.

State and Local Support for Youth Services

While all the ESS communities had to generate matching funding for the initiative, states and cities differed significantly in their willingness and ability to support youth services. As we visited the cities, we sought to place the critical issue of sustainability in the context of current levels of public support for youth services and possibilities for creating greater support.

In Denver, we heard that the levels of support for youth services in the State of Colorado are relatively low. Further, while the early childhood community is well-organized, the community of those interested in older youth and adolescents is in an earlier stage of development. In addition, Colorado has experienced a relatively recent economic boom and lacks the strong philanthropic community that other cities have. Sustainability for the cities in Colorado, therefore, is a very big challenge.

In contrast, Minnesota has a long tradition of support for social services. More particularly, the Center for Youth Development and Research at the University of Minnesota and the Search Institute have shaped strong support for a youth development approach in Minneapolis. These strong proponents of a youth development approach have helped to create an environment in which philosophical support (if not actual funding) for initiatives such as the Adaptation is strong. By state mandate, schools must address developmental needs beyond academic needs, and the Adaptation is seen as a strategy for doing so in Minneapolis, which encouraged school system buy-in.

Savannah, Georgia has a mature youth advocacy organization, the Youth Futures Authority, that is the fiscal agent for the Adaptation. Staff there doubt that the city could be encouraged to contribute much more to the Adaptation and are therefore considering other avenues for sustaining the initiative.

Local School Reform Efforts

Although school reform efforts are widespread across the United States, localities vary tremendously in the staging and extent of the efforts. Some cities express deep concern about student performance but have not yet settled on strategies to improve academic performance. Others have extensive strategies in place to improve both student outcomes and the quality of the education provided to students. Still others are beginning conversations at the state level about educational standards, but different performance standards have not yet been imposed on schools.

The ESS cities reflect this diversity. In Boston, Minneapolis and Atlanta, for example, increased standards have already been put in place, and schools and parents are responding to them. In those cities, heightened attention to standards and academic performance influences implementation strategies of the local Adaptation. In Chapter III, we describe how summer programming is scheduled around youth's summer school schedules. In other cities, school reform and academic standards are under discussion, but have not yet been implemented. Thus, they are not yet a conspicuous and central factor in making decisions about implementation, although it would probably be safe to say that

school reform and standards are a subtext for discussion of implementation across the cities.

Neighborhood Economic and Demographic Characteristics

In addition to the factors concerned primarily with the influence of city politics and funding issues on implementation at the city level, the characteristics of participating neighborhoods and communities are important to implementation. As in so many other dimensions, they are tremendously diverse. While most of the neighborhoods served by the ESS programs have high proportions of low-income residents, they range significantly from very poor or socially disorganized communities with few resources to moderately poor and fairly cohesive neighborhoods with a range of social services. In the former circumstance, lack of local resources means that the school-based programs may have difficulty identifying organizations and people who can provide activities at the schools.

Neighborhood demographics, including student demographics, also affect implementation. In communities with high proportions of immigrant families, especially those from Central and South America, the back-and-forth movement from communities in the United States to the countries of origin are reported to influence activity participation patterns. In addition, the presence of high proportions of immigrant families often leads to the implementation of certain kinds of programs, such as English As a Second Language (ESL), and requires meeting the challenge of recruiting students from different ethnic groups.

The diversity across the cities is impressive. Table 2.2 provides a snapshot that describes each of the intensive research cities with respect to the presence of pre-existing collaborations, support from state and local government, and whether local school reform efforts are under way. What the table cannot do, however, is describe the differential effects that cities may experience from similar circumstances. Those discussions will be presented in the evaluation's second report.

The Schools

By some measures, the schools selected for the initiative are typical of urban schools across the country. Most have student populations heavily representing minority youth—African American, Asian, Latino and a few Native Americans. The vast majority serve high proportions of low-income youth, and academic performance in many of the schools is reported to be low. Partly as a result, principal turnover is high: approximately one-third of the schools have had new principals within the past year, and two-thirds have had two or more principals in the past five years. Table 2.3 describes how the schools range on key demographic features.

The similarities, however, obscure some important differences. A small number of schools have strong, long-term principals who have been instrumental in the implementation of the initiative. Some are neighborhood schools, such as those in Denver and Atlanta. Similarly, Central Falls, Rhode Island, fits into a tiny geographic area—one square mile—so only a small proportion of youth are bused. Other schools,

Table 2.2
A Snapshot of Local Resources and Concerns That Affected Implementation

City	Pre-existing Collaborations	State and Local Government Support	Local School Reform Under Way
Atlanta			✔
Aurora			
Boston	✔		✔
Central Falls	✔	✔	✔
Denver	✔		
Jacksonville	✔	✔	✔
Long Beach	✔		✔

Table 2.3
School Demographics in ESS, by School Level

Level of School	Number of Schools*	Median Percent of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	Median Percent of Students Bused to School	Median Percent of Student Mobility
Elementary	18	78%	30%	33%
Middle	25	86	20	30
High	4	26	65	10

*Includes only those schools that responded to the organizational surveys

however, are in urban school systems in which students are bused long distances. Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS), for instance, buses 95 percent of all public school students, which is partly a result of integration efforts and partly a result of a poor fit between where schools are located and where families with young children live. Missoula has a relatively large population of rural youth who attend the city's five schools, and in three of them, over 40 percent of the students are bused. As Chapter V details, whether or not students are bused to school has a profound affect on program choices.

Another important difference includes the kind of programs available within the schools before ESS implementation began. Although consistent information about previous activities is lacking, the available information indicates that some schools had extensive social service or after-school programs, while others had relatively little.[3] For example, Florida has state-mandated full-service schools where services such as health care and mental health services are provided in the schools by outside (nonschool-district) agencies. The Adaptation school in Jacksonville, Florida, was therefore accustomed to the idea of opening up school buildings to outsiders, but it has not previously had extensive after-school programs for high school or elementary school youth. In several cities such as Minneapolis, school districts had community education programs that provided activities during the nonschool hours. However, for the most part, programming appeared to center around adult classes and after-school care for elementary school children, with a few activities for older youth.

In addition to school-district-run activities, community-based organizations sometimes ran activities within the schools prior to ESS, although it is safe to say that they did so much less frequently than after implementation began. YMCAs and other youth-serving organizations have long run fee-based after-school programs for youth whose parents work and do not want their children home alone.

Conclusion

The experiences of the schools in the Adaptation shed light on how a diverse range of school-based after-school programs evolve in a variety of settings. As the preceding discussion of the models, cities and schools suggests, the story we have to tell in the following pages is one of both complexity and diversity. Multiple factors influenced how implementation progressed in the schools, and what mattered in one school may not have mattered in another. In addition, the factors often interacted with each other. Thus, the significance of a lack of local services and resources in a Community School, which—as we shall show—was much more likely to draw upon teachers within the school to provide activities, was different from that in a Beacon Center, which was more likely to look for nonschool providers.

There is so much diversity in so many dimensions that it is not possible to explore each one systematically in the context of this report. Instead, it examines how contextual factors in the cities and schools influence how particular models adapt to their environment. This diversity moves the spotlight off the particular model and on to school-based after-school programs in general. Doing so enables us to identify the key factors that should concern cities and schools when designing their programs.

III. The Programs in the Schools

The major thing is to help kids succeed, to prepare them to be good citizens in the 21st century, which includes career, family, personal satisfaction, and the skills to be successful—[we need to] give them all the skills, prepare them for the next step that they're going to make. Also, get them involved in quality community activities.

—Fiscal Agent

As we saw earlier, each model intermediary and original model site had unique goals for the initiative. The Beacon model emphasizes youth development, which includes a number of goals. The Bridges to Success model focuses on improvements in children and youth's educational performance. The Community School model emphasizes the integration of educational and social services. WEPIC has a dual focus: improving both public school education and services, and university education. What happened when the models were adapted to different environments? Did they maintain their original vision? Or did the cities adapt them to their own particular contexts? Were the Adaptation programs able to translate their goals into relevant activities and services?

Programs offer a variety of Extended-Services and activities for youth and adults. While, for simplicity, we refer to these services and activities as after-school programs, they include before- and after-school programming, summer programs, during-school programs, and weekend and holiday activities. Special educational and recreational programs are run for adults. Several programs also provide a limited array of social services to students, their parents and community members. This chapter describes the activities offered across the sites and discusses how the types of activity relate to program goals. It also briefly examines the quality of programs and youth's responses, which we will discuss more systematically in a future report. As we have emphasized in previous chapters, the local initiatives were in their early stages of development, and the snapshots of program quality in the following pages provide a benchmark of what activities can look like after a year of implementation. Although we were often impressed by activities, some could be improved. Our future research will undoubtedly document improvements, as the school coordinators continue to work on the scope and quality of their programs.

In the following pages we address the following questions:

- What were the goals of the local initiatives?
- Did the goals vary by model type?
- What activities were implemented and how did they relate to the programs' goals?
- What was the quality of the activities at this early stage of implementation?

Goals of the Adaptation Programs

In a survey mailed to all ESS fiscal agents and program coordinators involved in the Adaptation, respondents were asked to identify their main program goals by selecting three of nine possible goal choices (see Table 3.1). The goals most frequently listed were: improve academic performance; increase positive relations with peers and adults; develop school-community partnerships; and ensure the safe and productive use of youth's out-of-school time. Other goals, such as increase parental involvement, decrease youth's negative behaviors, and create more opportunities for athletic or cultural enrichment were also frequently listed.

We found only modest differences in the goals selected by cities adapting different models. In fact, the distribution of only two goals differs significantly. In both cases, the differences were between Beacon and the other models.

Athletic and Cultural Experiences

We found that respondents in Beacon cities were more likely than were other respondents to list the importance of enriching the children's lives with athletic and cultural experiences: while slightly over half the Beacon respondents said that cultural and athletic experiences were important, less than a quarter of other respondents said so. We speculate that the difference is due to the extent to which the national intermediary for the Beacon model emphasizes youth development in its communications with cities. Of all the models, Beacon has the oldest and most extensive technical assistance effort. The Fund for the City of New York has been providing assistance to the New York City Beacon since 1991 and has developed an extensive collection of materials that explain the importance of youth developmental programming and places the goals of the Beacon within the context of youth development. The Beacon model emphasizes a focus on several key areas of youth development, of which educational achievement is one and the provision of recreational opportunities—including athletics—is another.

Partnership Building

The only other goal to differ by model is partnership-building. Again, the responses provided by school coordinators in the Beacon model differed significantly from the responses of school coordinators in the other models. Bridges to Success, Community Schools and WEPIC coordinators were more likely than were the Beacon sites to emphasize the importance of partnerships: only one-third of the Beacon coordinators mentioned collaboration, while two-thirds of the other coordinators did. We are unsure why this difference exists, since the philosophy underlying all models emphasizes collaboration. It is possible that the result is an artifact of the survey question, which forced respondents to choose only three goals. Since the Beacon model clearly delineates core program goals, it is possible that the school coordinators in the Beacon chose the programming goals in the survey that most closely resembled the model's goals.

Therefore, although goal differences exist among the models, they appear to be relatively modest overall. Three of the four goals most selected—improved academic performance, positive relations with peers and adults, partnerships between communities and schools, and the safe and productive use of out-of-school time—were the same across all models.

Table 3.1

Goals of ESS Adaptations	Number of Responses
Improving academic performance	27
Foster positive relations with peers and adults	26
Building partnerships between community organizations and schools	24
Using youth's out-of-school time safely and productively	23
Involving parents more in their children's lives and schools	15
Keeping youth off the streets and out of trouble	15
Enriching youth's lives with more athletic and cultural experiences	14
Fostering school reform	5
Making more social services available to youth and families	3

51 surveys had valid responses

Next we turn to the degree to which the programs were able to operationalize their goals. In particular, we examine whether the type of programming reflects a program's emphasis on academic performance, positive peer and adult relationships, and a safe, productive environment for the students. The issues of collaboration and partnership will be addressed in later chapters.

After-school Activities

After-school activities were by far the most prevalent type of programming offered. The organizational survey indicated that all the programs had an after-school component. Most programs run between the hours of 3:00p.m and 5:00p.m., but some begin as early as 2:00p.m. or end as late as 8:00p.m. Although considerable variation in programming content and instruction style exists across programs, there is strong consistency in the types of activity provided: all programs offer some form of direct academic support and cultural or creative enrichment activities; all but three programs offer some type of athletic programming (ranging from coached sports to individual classes and open gym time); and over half the programs offer career preparation instruction, decision-making and leadership activities, and a community service or service learning component. Approximately one third of the after-school programs offer their participants free time activities. The text box on the following page describes a program at an elementary school. The program is typical in providing a range of activities after school. It differs from some other programs, however, because many of the activities are provided by teachers. Nonetheless, it provides a snapshot of what is possible.

Programs vary in the amount of time they commit to different after-school activities. Across all programs, academic activities take precedence: in a typical week, 39 percent of the after-school time is spent on homework help, tutoring and/or academic enrichment. Just over 19 percent of the time is spent on cultural or creative enrichment activities, and another 19 percent is spent in some type of athletic activity. The remaining 23 percent of programs' after-school hours are taken up by a variety of other activities: 5 percent on career preparation; 7 percent on leadership and decision-making activities; 7 percent on community service or service learning; and 4 percent was free time.

An After-School ESS Program in an Elementary School

The school runs programs for children and their families. After school, there are activities from 3:00p.m. to 5:30p.m. for approximately 50 youth. From 3:00p.m. to 3:45p.m., children can get help on their homework from high school youth who act as group leaders and mentors. A snack follows, and from 4:00p.m. to 5:00p.m. the children engage in a structured activity, the topic of which changes weekly (e.g., substance abuse prevention education, arts and crafts). From 5:00p.m. to 5:30p.m. children have free time to read, color or play board games until their parents pick them up. The activity runs throughout the school year.

Teachers at the school run a variety of activities such as drama, science, hiking, multicultural and art clubs. The clubs are scheduled for one or two days per week after school. In the science club, we observed children working on a volcano project that involved making volcanoes that erupted as well as reading about volcanoes and hearing the teacher tell stories about volcanoes from her experience. The activities last approximately 8 to 12 weeks before a new cycle begins.

Teachers also offer family math and reading club activities that target parents of third graders who are most at risk of academic failure. Parents and youth participate together, and parents learn strategies for helping their children with their academic work. Such strategies include tips on how to help children think through a problem and how to encourage them in their work.

In the morning, program staff offer morning homework help on an informal basis to children who feel they need it. On weekends, the city Parks and Recreation department provides recreational activities on the school playground for area youth. Once or twice a year, a Saturday pancake breakfast is held to bring teachers, school staff, parents and youth together in a social setting.

Parents in the ethnically diverse community that the elementary school serves attend ESL, computer and other parent education courses. Some parent programs are held during the school day and others are held after school.

Across the models, there are modest differences in the time allotted to different types of activities. Community Schools dedicate more time to academic and service activities than do all three other models. Bridges

to Success programs tend to spend slightly more time in academic and cultural or creative enrichment activities than do Beacon. Beacon programs offer more athletic activities than do any other model, spending twice the amount of time in athletic activities than do Bridges programs, the next most likely to offer sports.

Despite modest model differences, all the programs offer many hours of academically oriented activities. Most partners and parents agreed that academic support is important. In addition, academic activities, especially homework help, are relatively easy to set up.

By design, youth participation across activities and programs varies. Within any ESS program there may be some activities that meet once or twice per week and others that meet daily. Some run for two or three hours after school, and youth participate in two or three separate activities during that time, as is the case in the YMCA program discussed in the text box on the previous page.

Summer Programs

Approximately three-quarters of ESS programs offered programming during Summer 1999. The structure of these programs varies more widely than that of the after-school programs.

On average, programs offer six hours of activity on weekdays for approximately six weeks during the summer. Some programs operate in the morning, others straddle the middle of the day and some stretch into the early evening. Several programs are scheduled to dovetail with morning summer school programs—students attend academic classes in the morning and stay at school for ESS activities in the afternoon. Such coordination eases the task of recruiting because a ready pool of participants is already at the school.

Summer programs also have a tendency to serve younger youth, regardless of the level of the school in which they are located. In one of the Beacon centers visited, program staff noted that serving younger youth serves the interests of both parents with day care needs and programs that wish to enroll many children. For example, in its first summer of operation, one Beacon center located in a middle school found its activities for middle school youth undersubscribed, while its activities for elementary youth were fully enrolled. As a result, the next summer's programming was designed specifically for elementary school students.

Program offerings in the summer vary. Like the after-school programs, most summer programs provide some type of academic activity, a cultural or creative enrichment activity, and an athletic activity. Time in these activities is more evenly distributed than it is during the school year, with 23 percent of time being spent in academics, 23 percent in cultural or creative enrichment, and 27 percent in athletics. The remaining 27 percent of time is spread across career preparation activities (6%), decision-making and leadership activities (9%), community service or service learning (5%), and free time (6%). To a large extent, this more balanced programming reflects a natural shift in priorities. Homework help is dropped as an activity, while time spent on academic enrichment (in science, math, reading, etc.) remains strong—the hours of enrichment offered during the summer increases slightly. The text box on the following page describes a summer program in a middle school.

Model differences in summer programs are subtle but notably similar to those found in after-school activities. Bridges programs spend a moderately greater amount of time in academic, cultural and creative enrichment activities, while Beacon programs spend more time in athletic activities. Only two Community School programs run summer programs, while no WEPIC programs do so.

As an addition to standard ESS summer programming, numerous programs coordinate with community organizations to have their youth placed in summer camps. Organizations like the YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs and smaller local nonprofits run free and low-cost summer camps for the youth in their communities. Through partnerships with these organizations, ESS staff recommend their students for the camps, where slots are reserved for them. During our site visits, we observed that these partnerships worked well and benefitted the youth involved.

A Summer ESS Program in a Middle School

The Beacon program is scheduled for six weeks in the summer. Although the program serves primarily middle school youth during the school year, it serves a large proportion of elementary school students in the summer. Approximately 100 youth/day attend the program.

The program provides a daily summer camp that provides elementary school youth with recreational and cultural learning opportunities. The summer program relies heavily on youth staff—12 are employed for the summer. Two of the youth staff are paid by a local summer youth employment program, the rest are paid by the program. Youth staff assist in activity instruction and provide office and general support. During our visit, youth staff were in and out of the program's office, helping younger students with problems and ensuring that they knew where they were going.

In addition to the camp, there are activities once or twice a week for both elementary and middle school youth. The activities vary. A nutrition and fitness activity accommodates approximately 12 youth and meets two afternoons per week for four hours. Youth in the class cook, exercise and learn about healthy nutrition. A low-rider model car club meets two times per week in which youth build customized model cars. The activity instructors act as positive role models for Latino youth. A basketball clinic meets four times per week in the afternoon for four hours. A gang education program meets twice per week for an hour and a half in the afternoon. The group serves 20 youth on a regular basis and permits other youth from the Beacon to join in activities that interest them; a computer lab meets four times per week after lunch; and Hip Hop Dance meets twice per week in the afternoons. Other summer activities include open gym, soccer, swimming and football.

In accordance with Beacon philosophy and practice, many instructors encourage youth to join their activities informally. As a result, youth involved in the basketball clinic might spend part of the afternoon in the gang education program or the nutrition and fitness class.

Before-school, During-school and Weekend or Holiday Programs

Since fewer before-school, during-school and weekend or holiday programs are being run, they do not easily lend themselves to systematic comparison; but our visits to the intensive sites make it possible to describe the types of activity provided.

Before-School Programming

At the time of the report, only four programs had before-school programs. Of these, two are Community Schools and two are Bridges to Success programs. Three of the four programs operate in elementary schools (the fourth is in a middle school). This may be explained in part by the likelihood that elementary school students with working parents have the greatest need for early morning day care.

Before-school programs run for a half-hour to an hour before the start of the school day, and tend to offer academic support, enrichment activities and time to socialize. Teachers in the one before-school program we observed said they value the program because it allows them to have more meaningful one-on-one contact with youth. They said that the morning program allows the children to ease into the school day and gives them an opportunity to socialize.

School-Day Programming

Eleven programs operate during the regular school day: nine Bridges to Success programs, one Community School program and one WEPIC program. Beacon programs do not provide during-school activities. Given the philosophies of both Community Schools and WEPIC, it is not surprising that they have activities during the school day. It is surprising, however, that Bridges to Success models are almost as likely to have activities during the school day as are the other two models (at least in the first year of operations), given that Bridges' mission does not stress integration into the school day as heavily. The national intermediary helping the Bridges' cities, however, did stress the need for "full coordination" with the school.

The structure and content of these activities vary more than any other—some run for the duration of the school day five days a week, others for only an hour or two over the course of school lunch periods. Model differences are difficult to identify because we have relatively limited data; however, it is interesting to note that only Bridges programs offer mentoring during the school day.

Weekend and Holiday Programming

Approximately half of the programs run weekend or holiday activities. Again, there is considerable variation in the frequency and structure of these programs. In many cases programs plan special events or activities for youth and their families, including student-planned

community clean-up days, cultural fairs and sporting events, or open-gym time. A few programs offer traditional academic classes; others stage holiday parties or dinners. WEPIC programs are the only model not to offer weekend or holiday activities. Beyond this, model differences are not apparent.

Adult Programs

Approximately a third of the programs offer adult activities to community members and parents. The range of activities is quite wide, but selection of activities at any given school is limited: only three programs currently offer more than one or two activities. Adult programs offer educational opportunities such as ESL, GED, parenting, computer technology, citizenship, and First Aid and CPR classes. Other activities include recreational and fitness classes like aerobics or open gym time, and social or family oriented activities.

We learned that building participation in these classes is sometimes difficult. Programs reported that parents often express interest in participating but seldom attend. Between the demands of work and family, parents have very busy schedules. Lack of transportation to and from the school, along with a lack of day care during the classes, may limit participation. The next stage of our research will look more closely at the challenges and successes of adult programming.

Social Service Offerings

Only a few programs provide social services to the youth and families in their communities. These programs consist mainly of health, mental health, legal aid and immigration services. The Gardner Elementary School in Boston (a Community School) is an example of a program with a well-developed social service program. It offers students and families referrals to local health and mental health clinics, conducts dental screenings in classrooms, provides check-ups for youth who require care, runs a series of talks on basic health issues such as hygiene and human sexuality, and provides confidential legal counseling and workshops on immigration procedures for community members, many of whom are immigrants.

The Gardner program is unusual in offering this broad array of services. In the first year of implementation, most programs were consumed by the tasks of providing activities for youth. Budgetary constraints also limited outreach and some school districts placed restrictions on offering health services through schools.

Program Quality

ESS programs across the country strive to enrich youth's lives by creating positive youth experiences that promote healthy social, intellectual, emotional and physical growth. The importance of this pursuit makes assessing program quality a critical research task. A year into operations, we began our examination of quality by observing a small sample of diverse activities and talking to student participants. The goal was to determine what qualities are valued by the participants and what key supports and opportunities are present in these types of program. Given that coordinators were trying out many of these activities for the first time, the goal was *not* to make definitive statements about the programs' quality. Instead, we hoped to identify dimensions of youth development programming that might be more easily implemented.

We observed program activities in five of the 10 intensive cities.[4] Our observations made two things immediately clear. First, ESS staff care deeply about the students in their programs. They often express this care by spending one-on-one time with youth seeking extra attention, by putting in longer hours than they are paid for, and by sometimes providing additional activity resources out of their own pockets to make activities successful. Likewise, youth commented favorably on the program coordinators and activity providers.

> *Ms. X is the perfect adult. She's very nice, interacts with us. She really cares. You wish you had her as your mom.*
>
> —Youth

Such positive relationships between staff and students is an important indicator of program quality.

In addition to the quality of adult youth relationships, we examined three other key dimensions of program quality: quality of peer relationships; structure and management of activities; and opportunities for youth decision-making. A total of 23 activities were observed in five sites, and most observations lasted between 30 and 60 minutes.

Adult/Youth Relationships

One of the most important components of program quality involves positive relationships between adult staff and youth. Positive relationships are marked by numerous factors including staff members' capacity to remain accessible during an activity, answer questions and offer help or support to ensure that each youth achieves a level of success. Youth's responsiveness to staff instruction is also an important component. For example, students may seem eager to please staff by remaining on task and listening to staff instruction. An activity provider can be equally responsive to youth by listening attentively, calling students by name, smiling and gently joking with them.

Of the four components of quality, positive adult-youth relationships was consistently the strongest in our observations. Staff worked hard to make time with youth both fun and meaningful, and many seemed to exude a natural fondness for their young charges. The majority of qualitative observation notes highlight this. Offering caring attention to individual youth is an essential marker of quality, even in group activities. Instructors in programs provide instrumental support ranging from commenting on youth's progress to encouraging youth to come to them with questions about their tasks. To support individual youth, staff circulate throughout the activity to check on each one and make sure he or she is doing well.

In some cases youth have difficulty or seem detached, and some staff are skilled in responding to individual needs. The following account describes such an occasion:

> *When they went outside to play an animal tag game, one overweight girl who was wearing glasses ran across the tag line last and then acted like there was a problem with her glasses—but it seemed more likely that she was uncomfortable because she was slower than the other students and the last to finish. [The staff person] ran over to check on her and asked her if she wanted to swing on the swings instead of play tag. She wanted to swing and went over to do that. [The staff person] started up a second round of tag and then told the group he was going to take a short break. He ran over to join the girl with glasses on the swings for a while. He sympathized with her about the glasses and then talked about other more fun things.*

Low student-to-staff ratios promote this kind of one-on-one interaction. In looking toward the future, several school coordinators expressed their concern that as youth participation rates increase, this kind of quality one-on-one time may diminish.

Positive adult/youth relationships are enhanced by staff efforts to recognize students' accomplishments in activities. Most often we observed staff giving verbal praise such as "good job," "nice" or "looks great." Sometimes a staff person fostered recognition of accomplishments by encouraging youth to comment on and praise their peers' work. In one activity the staff person took flattering individual photographs of each student in decorative hats they had made the week before. She planned to post the photos on a bulletin board at the school.

In focus groups, youth noted that they liked and appreciated the attention they received from adults in the programs:

> *Before youth council meetings, we spend about 20 minutes talking about our day and one thing we are proud of. That's what I mean—an adult that I can talk to—even if we tell them what we're doing [wrong], they don't get all mad. Like [the school coordinator]—we joke around.*

Structure and Management

The positive nature of adult/youth relationships is heavily influenced by the way staff structures and manages activities. This involves setting up age-appropriate behavioral demands that are clear to participants and striking a balance between being firm yet warm. In this way staff can maintain authority without being overly controlling. Many staff did this well and managed difficult situations calmly.

With middle school and high school aged students, good management often means being flexible and somewhat hands-off. Field notes from observations of an art activity exemplify this style:

> *The class is loosely structured and managed. The instructor tells the students everything they need to know to get started and then she lets them progress independently. She consistently but casually checks on their work and will offer various suggestions and supportive comments.*

Some youth with whom we spoke clearly valued this approach, noting that:

> *We don't want the adults to always be on us, telling us, "you have to do this and you have to do that."*

We did, however, see activities for older youth that were highly structured, yet successful at attracting teens. In one school, high school youth in a leadership group had very strict rules about behavior and engaged in a series of initiation rites to join the group. The youth's behavior was strictly monitored, and youth who did not follow the group's regulations were censured. The youth, however, expressed considerable pride in their group membership and perceived the regulations as necessary. The youth had been instrumental in developing and enforcing the group's strict regulations. Therefore, although the rigid structure had originally been advocated by the instructor, the youth adopted it as their own. Thus, for at least some youth, even highly structured and regulated activities may be appealing.

For younger youth, good management requires more structure. A karate instructor for preschool and kindergarten students developed an effective technique:

> *Interaction between the instructor and youth was extremely positive. The instructor had the students' riveted attention for the duration of the class and although he maintained discipline by pretending to be very stern and keeping the students in neat rows, his act of being a firm disciplinarian was so over-done that students realized he was playing with them. For much of the class he had the students giggling with delight and amusement but at the same time working hard to follow his instructions.*

Overly structured instruction styles had drawbacks. Some observers identified cases of firm instructor control and instruction in which youth were expected to be quiet and controlled throughout the class and only interact when called upon by the teacher. While youth in these situations usually responded by behaving well and staff/student relationships remained positive, the control sometimes stymied creativity and peer interaction, as the following notes suggest:

> *The instructor for this activity maintained strong command of the class. She gave a brief talk in front of the students about [the art project] before she began and while she effectively elicited a positive amount of participation from students she gave numerous prompts for students to be quiet and listen to what she was saying. It was very important to her that she had their attention. It appeared that this firm consistency on her part may have limited positive peer interactions within the activity.*

Youth in focus groups provided consistent information about how adults could structure and oversee activities that appealed to them. They liked staff presence because adults could mediate potential disputes among youth:

> *Adults should make sure that people don't fight.*

They also liked adults because, "they help give you ideas and provide resources. They help when you get stuck." However, they were very clear that how adults approached them was important, noting that they did not like to be told rules repeatedly, did not like being

yelled at, and liked to be treated respectfully. The following account highlights how the youth felt adults could help out when there is a problem:

> *Yesterday we had to do a Blizzard Project—like you had to list the most important things that you needed if you were stuck in a blizzard. James said that a knife should be the first thing so that you could kill your food.' Jessica said that a lighter should be the first thing so that you could cook the food. They argued about it; we teased Jessica, and she cried. We shouldn't have teased her, but it was a good debate. [The school coordinator] talked to us in the car [on the way home]. It was good, the way he approached it. A teacher would have forced us to do something, but he just persuades us. He'd talk to you and make you want to apologize. We apologized today.*

Peer Support

The third aspect of program quality, peer support, is closely linked to staff's establishment of good relationships with youth and appropriate activity structure. Positive, friendly and supportive peer relations can be effectively fostered by staff who serve as role models and encourage youth to cooperate, share ideas, and help or teach each other. Peer support is visible in youths' friendly interactions and comfort with each other, and most of the activities we observed had such amicable exchanges. Youth participated in group discussions. They cheered each other on in informal races. They helped one another achieve activity goals. In our focus groups, youth talked about how much they liked the interactions with their peers and the opportunities they sometimes had to get together with youth from other schools who were involved in the local initiatives. For example, in one city a summer program included informal football games between youth at two schools, which they found exciting and interesting. Depending on the structure of the program, youth at some extended-service schools also benefitted from interactions with youth from other age groups, schools or neighborhoods.

Decision-Making and Leadership

Decision-making and leadership opportunities were observed with less consistency than were quality relationships among peers and between youth and staff. Having decision-making and leadership as key parts of programs required planning on the part of activity providers and, sometimes, staff training in youth development practices. Because many programs worked under considerable pressure to begin programming as soon as possible, time for this kind of planning and training was typically in short supply.

In the activities where decision-making was visible, youth were invited to help plan the activity and/or were given opportunities to decide how they would carry it out. When dealing with children, instructors often determined the activity but let the children creatively decide how they would go about completing it. The following account from field notes illustrates this balanced and effective division of decision-making opportunities:

> *Although [the activity] follows a curriculum, the youth are able to make decisions on selecting projects and carrying them out. The Indian Puzzle Project allowed the youth to solve problems creatively — lack of space outside posed a problem in cutting the wood but the youth managed to use an old chair to stabilize the wood, while one cut and the other held the chair and wood. The instructor practiced a "hands-off" approach, assisting only when necessary, which provided the youth with several decision-making opportunities.*

Another example occurred in a map-making exercise:

> *Although the youth were fairly young in age, this activity offered a wide range of decision-making and leadership opportunities. For instance all youth designed a map and as a group had to decide which map to use, which clues to use and where to place the clues.*

Staff are clearly instrumental in creating decision-making opportunities for youth. Youth reported in focus groups that they wanted adult support, "sometimes it's good when adults push you and tell you that you can

do it," but they also "don't want the adults to always be on us." Not all activity staff we observed, however, were equally skilled in encouraging active decision-making among youth, even at modest levels, as the following accounts suggest:

> *Youth were allowed to chose the book they wanted read. However, when they chose a book that was considered "too long" by the instructor, they were encouraged to chose another one.*

> *With the Plaster of Paris tree, students were instructed on exactly how and where to put the plaster.*

If providing youth with opportunities to make decisions about the way they carry out tasks is one end of the decision-making continuum, then providing opportunities for leadership may be the other end. There are very few examples of leadership opportunities in the programs' activities. Leadership can take various forms. It is most obvious when youth are given opportunities to be group leaders or captains. Yet it is also apparent when activities are designed for youth to help each other as tutors or informally make decisions as a group. One such example occurred in a summer library program where youth were free to look at books or play a selection of board games. Many of the youth who chose to play games in small groups developed informal leadership structures whereby older youth guided younger youth by helping them learn the rules and procedures of the game.

Middle and high school students were likely to have more formal opportunities for leadership. Some students involved in their own after-school teen clubs were guided by ESS staff to plan activities and events that interested them:

> *This activity offered many opportunities for decision-making and leadership. The carnival had many aspects to it and all youth had a part in making sure it was carefully planned out. For instance, custodial issues were a concern for the carnival, because it was being held on school grounds. The group, with help from the instructor, was able to call a meeting with a representative from the custodial department. The questions and answers ranged from trash can usage to the time at which to end the carnival. The youth and the custodial rep seemed to be at ease with the meeting.*

The evaluation has just begun to examine the activities' youth development qualities. This initial examination explored youth's perception of quality and examined quality in a range of first-year activities. In general, the quality of the activities we observed appeared to be relatively high despite the newness of the programs. As we more systematically study the activities across the cities, we will explore what factors and practices are associated with higher-quality activities. For example, the activities provided by established youth-serving organizations may be stronger than those created by program staff in the schools. Such information will be important for identifying effective strategies for implementing after-school programs.

Summary

Even though the prototypical models emphasize different goals, what practitioners aim for in their programs is remarkably similar. They want their programs to enhance the academic performance of the children, provide them with positive peer and adult relationships, and give them something productive to do in a safe environment.

A strong and consistent commitment to academic work is present across programs irrespective of subtle variations in the models' visions. We speculate that this occurs because of the relative ease with which these programs, particularly homework help, can be set up, and because most partners (including parents) agree that academic support is of primary importance.

Given the similarities in goals, it is not surprising that to a large degree the activities of cities adapting different models are distributed fairly similarly across activity areas—academics, enrichment, sports, and other creative and cultural classes. During the past school year, approximately 40 percent of activity hours were academic, 20 percent were cultural or creative enrichment activities, 20 percent were athletic, and the remainder were various. Summer program offerings were evenly split among these four areas, reflecting the reduced urgency of academic pursuits during the summer and youth's desire to be more physically active.

However, which model the cities adapted does exert an influence. Community Schools and Bridges programs offer somewhat more academic activities than do the other types of programs, while Beacon offer more athletic and cultural opportunities, consistent with their strong youth development emphasis. Thus, during this first year of implementation, the specific activities and services offered in the various programs were affected both by the model they were adapting and what appeared to be fairly standard goals and concerns.

Program quality is something we will continue to examine more as programs mature. Our early observations show that very positive relationships between staff and youth and among peers—both critical signs of quality—were exhibited in the activities even during the first year of operations. Examples of decision-making opportunities and leadership, on the other hand, were observed less consistently during the programs' early implementation. We expect that as the programs mature and the staff receive more training and become more experienced we will observe activities that incorporate more youth input opportunities.

IV. Who Shows Up and How They Get There

Far too many low-income youth lack opportunities in the after-school hours to apply and broaden the skills they are learning in supervised, fun settings. The opening of ESS's school-based after-school programs provided the student bodies of those schools with expanded opportunities. In this chapter we discuss which students took advantage of the activities during their first year of operation and how they were recruited. We describe the reasons parents reported for sending their children to these new school-based programs. Because some commentators worry that school-based after-school programs might disproportionately serve more engaged students, we compare characteristics of the youth who do and do not participate. This allows us to address questions of the relative penetration of the program into different segments of the school population. We also describe the range of recruitment methods ESS school coordinators used the first year to provide potentially useful information to others starting similar programs. The specific questions we address are:

- What are some of the characteristics of youth who enrolled in the programs in school year 1999?
- Did the programs, in their first year, draw equally from all segments of the student population?
- What recruitment methods are used to bring students to the programs?

Why Parents Enrolled Their Children

Children's involvement in after-school programs is determined not just by themselves but, especially for younger children, by their parents. They and their parents must learn about the program; the parents must decide to allow their children to enroll and the child must want to attend. Thus, before presenting the characteristics of the children who enrolled in the programs, we discuss why the parents wanted their children to be involved.

In the intensive research cities, parents filled out a brief questionnaire when they enrolled their child.[6] To date, data from approximately 800 parents are available. The reasons parents gave for involving their children, shown in Table 4.1, reveal what they hoped the

Table 4.1
Parents' Reasons for Enrolling Youth in ESS After-school Programs

My child wanted to get involved.	76%
My child can make friends and have fun.	54
It provides affordable after-school care.	19
It provides dependable after-school care.	21
It will help my child do better in school.	53
School staff suggested that my child enroll.	12
It is a safe place for my child after school.	41
My child can get to and from the program easily and safely.	30
Sample Size	**800**

Note: Distribution adds to more than 100 percent because as many choices as applied could be checked.

Table 4.2
Number of Youth Enrolled in ESS Programs by Spring 1999

City by Models	Number of Youth Enrolled
Beacons	
Denver	862 (3 schools)
Minneapolis	850 (3 schools)
Oakland	n/a
Savannah	748 (3 schools)
Bridges	
Central Falls	398 (3 schools)
Flint	380 (3 schools)
Greensborough	256 (2 schools)
Jacksonsville	300 (5 schools)
Mesa	1,074 (3 schools)
Missoula	559 (5 schools)
Philadelphia	749 (7 schools)
Community Schools	
Boston	145 (1 school)
Long Beach	n/a
Salt Lake	90 (1 school)
WEPIC	
Albuquerque	n/a
Aurora	90 (1 school)
Atlanta	40 (1 school)
Denver	n/a

n/a = not available

program would do for their child and for them." Three-quarters of the parents reported that their child wanted to be involved in the program and more than half (54%) saw it as an opportunity to enable their children to have fun and make friends. All parents, no matter what their economic or social background, want to provide their children with these types of enriching opportunities. In poor communities, such as those served by ESS, however, few of these opportunities exist, parents may not be able to afford those that do exist, parents and children often do not know about them if they do exist, or parents are concerned about the safety of the services (Branch, 1998). Thus, the ESS program was seen by the vast majority of parents who were able to enroll their youth as a most welcome enriching addition to their children's lives.

Four out of 10 parents stated that the safety of the program was an important factor. And yet, one-third (30%) of the parents still worried about the safety of their child's journey to and from the program. As we will see when we discuss the challenges the programs faced, safety considerations had both cost and programming implications.

Academic achievement was also a common reason for enrolling children. Half the parents hoped the program would be able to help their children with school. In conversations with parents and staff, we were told repeatedly about the parents' desire that the program help their children with their homework. Most school coordinators we spoke with about homework help told us that although they wanted to do more enrichment activities, they felt pressure from parents to concentrate on homework.

Somewhat surprisingly, while many advocates mention the child-care role of these programs, only one in five parents mentioned this as a reason for enrolling their children. This may be because in general ESS programs viewed themselves as youth development programs, not primarily child care programs.

Profile of ESS Student Populations and Participants

Typically, enrollment in any new initiative is modest the first year, as staff put the program in place. Yet in the spring of their first year of implementation, ESS programs enrolled 6,000 students. Table 4.2 shows how they were distributed across models and cities.

On average, the Beacons had larger programs, with a Spring 1999 enrollment of 273 students per school. Bridges programs averaged 133 students per school; Community Schools averaged 118 students per school and the WEPIC school enrolled 40 students. (Recall that the WEPIC cities did not have a planning period like the other three models; therefore, they are programmatically younger.) As we will discuss in Chapter VII, Beacon Centers had relatively large budgets compared to Bridges and WEPIC programs. Their ability to hire more staff and activity providers may explain why they served more children.

Before describing them, we profile the student populations in the schools in which ESS operates. In the organizational surveys, program staff provided us with information about their total student populations and the characteristics of students who enrolled in the program. As discussed earlier, ESS programs are located in schools serving a large proportion of low-income families: program staff estimated that 72 percent of students receive free or reduced-priced lunch. The ESS schools are ethnically and racially diverse: 42 percent of the youth across all schools are African American, 30 percent white, 23 percent Latino, and 5 percent belonged to some other racial group.

The students who actually enroll in programs are quite similar to the general student populations from which they are drawn. The ethnic and racial make-up of the enrollees was: 45 percent African American, 33 percent white, 19 percent Latino, and 3 percent some other racial group. Thus, the programs appear to have been equally attractive to all groups.

Table 4.3
Enrollees' Gender by School Level

	Male	Female
Total	49%	51%
Elementary	46%	54%
Middle	51%	49%
High	49%	51%
Sample Size	**2,157**	**2,266**

We also found that the student bodies are split evenly between boys and girls. Participation of girls in extracurricular programs typically declines dramatically as they get older—perhaps because they take on more household responsibilities (Warren, 1999; Gambone and Arbreton, 1997). However, Table 4.3 shows that even in the middle and high school programs, girls are being effectively recruited. This is an important accomplishment.

We know more about the enrollees in a subsample in the intensive research cities where parents have provided us with more data, including financial information. The demographic characteristics of the youth in schools in these intensive research cities are remarkably similar to those in all the ESS schools. In particular, 48 percent of the intensive research schools' student population are African American, 29 percent white and 15 percent Latino. Three-quarters of the student population qualifies for free- or reduced-priced lunch. Table 4.4 presents data from approximately 800 forms. We found that these early enrolling children are slightly less likely than their respective student bodies to come from low-income families. While three-quarters of the school populations qualify for free- or reduced-priced lunch, only two-thirds (66%) of enrollees qualify. Similarly, the programs were less able to draw in children from single-parent homes. While 37 percent of the students in these schools live with only one parent, 26 percent of the enrollees are from single-parent families. Thus, while ESS serves thousands of poor children, at least in these cities, it may be that poor families are slightly less likely to have signed their children up in the first year of operation than were nonpoor families —perhaps because they do not know about the program or they want to see the quality of the program first. However, it should be kept in mind that the programs are quite new and the data from the parents represent information on the earlybirds, the first children who signed up for the program. It is typical that the first participants in any voluntary program are the most motivated or most involved.

The sense that these early enrollers were students who were perhaps more assertive and involved was shared by many coordinators. The parents most involved with their children were the ones who responded to the enrollment opportunity.

Table 4.4
Selected Characteristics of Youth at the Time of ESS Enrollment

Characteristic	ESS Initial Sample
Gender (%)	
Female	56
Male	44
Ethnicity[a] (%)	
Black or African American	29
White	48
Latino	17
Other	14
Missing	1
Youth's Grade in School (%)	
Grade 3 or lower	30
Grade 4	13
Grade 5	11
Grade 6	21
Grade 7	13
Grade 8	10
Grade 9	1
Grade 10 or higher	1
Number of Adults in the Household (%)	
1	26
2	58
3	8
4 or more	6
Missing	2
Number of Children in the Household, Including Enrolled Youth (%)	
1	15
2	37
3	25
4	13
5 or more	9
Missing	1
Receive Free/Reduced Price Lunch (%)	
Free lunch	56
Reduced price lunch	10
Neither	32
Missing	2
Annual Household Income (%)	
Less than $11,000	21
$11,000 to $14,000	12
$14,001 to $20,000	13
$20,001 to $30,000	16
$30,001 to $40,000	8
Over $40,000	15
Missing	15
Sample Size	**803**

[a] Distribution adds to more than 100 percent because as many choices as applied could be checked.

The students who attend the program currently are the involved students. The challenge has been involving youth who are not involved in activities. [It] seems that most don't want to be involved in anything or they are already very busy.
—School Coordinator

Many coordinators expressed a desire to be doing more in terms of outreach to at-risk children. For example, one coordinator stated: "I feel like we're providing services to many needy kids, but I would like to serve more highly at-risk students." The coordinators described the most difficult to reach population as low income, non-English-speaking, behind in school, poor in attendance, prone toward detention and lacking in support at home. These are the children who most dislike school, or whose parents are too busy or distracted to notice even a school-based program.

As discussed below, coordinators and principals devised more proactive strategies to reach this population, such as directly contacting parents or holding registration in particular apartment buildings or neighborhoods.

Recruitment Strategies and Challenges

Recruitment involves notifying and convincing both students and their parents about the benefits of the program. Programs have developed a variety of strategies.

The initial part of the summer registration was tough. We were calling kids' homes, during the school year we'd stop and talk with kids in the halls, a thousand flyers got passed out to the students in the school and we drove out to like 10 houses to drop off flyers for parents. Flyers were also posted at different places like the community center. We did a lot of calling and we really needed to highlight that the program was free and that we could give rides home. We invited parents here for a snack one day so that we could tell them about the program.
—Program Staff

Like this program, most consider recruitment to be an ongoing task. Staff consistently reported a strong reliance on informal grapevines:

> *Word of mouth is the best method. People who've experienced the Beacons can go off and tell people about how great it is.*
> —Program Staff

Many recruitment strategies are undertaken at the schools. Activity providers and program coordinators make presentations in classrooms and at assemblies. They set up information tables at Back-to-School and Open House nights. They also circulate in school lunchrooms—sometimes doing demonstrations to attract youth's interest. Coordinators reported that they recruit youth by mingling with them in the halls and telling them about the activities. Several programs even hold special events like barbeques or festivals to draw in students, families and community members. Parents are also invited to the school for coffee so they can meet with coordinators and learn about the programs.

Teachers are included as key links in the word-of-mouth chain. ESS staff present activity information to them at faculty meetings and ask them to hand out or post flyers, tell students about the programs in their homerooms or classes, and give their permission for ESS staff to do presentations in their classes.

Because so much of recruitment is school-based, the quality of relationships with school staff has a more immediate impact on the ease or difficulty of recruitment. Interacting with youth in the lunchrooms, posting information on school bulletin boards, presenting information to youth in classrooms and making announcements over school public address systems all require administrative consent. While few principals actually prohibit this kind of involvement, some do more than others to ensure that ESS staff have easy access to facilities. Furthermore, programs that have better relationships with and support from teachers have an easier time recruiting.

School-based strategies are not always effective for parents. Many coordinators, therefore, try to contact parents by phone and mailings. In multilingual programs, flyers and brochures are published in multiple languages to draw in non-English speakers. Program staff often mentioned that simply sending information home with youth does not guarantee that it reaches parents; direct contact proves to be important. A few ESS staff make targeted home visits and others deliver brochures to parents' doors, especially to attract needier students. These coordinators feel that if parents knew about the array of activities ESS provides they would encourage their children to enroll.

ESS partners and collaborators help to advertise the program through their own professional networks. They post information at their centers or offices and pass information on to other youth-serving organizations or community centers. A few programs arrange for the broadcast of radio announcements or the publication of newspaper articles. Staff and local initiative leaders think that raising public awareness about programs will not only increase youth participation but also help lay the groundwork for beneficial partnerships with potential funders and collaborators.

Although many program staff desire to serve the youth they consider most at risk, they also reported that recruiting needier students requires special effort. Referrals from principals, teachers and student support teams are the most common means through which programs attempt to recruit such at-risk youth. Several schools have developed targeted recruitment strategies designed to be less stigmatizing than referrals. For example, one school holds registration in public housing or low-income apartment units. In another, the management team unofficially closed the program to families who were financially better off:

> *We targeted the program to our low-income kids...I tell the other parents, "No space available." We targeted our recruitment by going to particular apartment complexes. This way we limited the audience and recruited there.*
> —Principal

Another way programs, particularly Beacons programs, encourage the participation of poorly performing students is to associate their programs with their lead agencies and not the school. By having a strong Boys & Girls Club or YWCA identity, the lead agency hopes that students, especially those who may be wary of school programs, will be more attracted to the program. It is too early to say whether this assumption is

accurate; students and staff spoke of children being attracted by particular activities—such as a climbing wall or basketball—not an organization.

Factors Affecting Recruitment

The amount of energy program staff put into outreach and recruitment is impressive, particularly at the start-up of initiatives. Although many factors influence the success or difficulty with which programs are able to recruit, two seem especially central: the age of the youth being served and the number of other youth-serving organizations and programs in the community.

Age of Youth. ESS staff reported that it is significantly easier to recruit younger youth for programs (reflected in Table 4.4). They found that elementary school students have fewer extracurricular activities to juggle, and their parents often depend on summer programming to meet their day-care needs. Providing a regimen of activities four to five days a week proves to be essential in attracting elementary students. As the comments of one school coordinator illustrate, some programs learned about this the hard way:

> *We had activities Monday, Wednesday and Friday for little kids, and families had trouble bringing them just for three days a week. What families need is day care.*
>
> —School Coordinator

Developing successful programs for high school youth is a different story. Unlike elementary school children, older students are less likely to attend a five-day-a-week program because they have busier schedules, increased responsibilities and greater freedom. A school coordinator summarized some of the issues involved in outreach to older youth:

> *The high school kids have jobs and are inconsistent in coming. They help their parents with rent or they don't have cars...I'd have to drive a lot of them home. I mean a lot. And they're really inconsistent. It's been hard to reach the goal of 200 students.*
>
> —School Coordinator

Another school coordinator explained that reaching older middle school youth is also a challenge:

> *I would especially like to reach more 7th and 8th grade students, but they tend to be involved in more activities after school hours that aren't sponsored by our project.*
>
> —School Coordinator

All youth programs struggle to involve older youth, even well established YMCAs or Boys & Girls Clubs (Gambone and Arbreton, 1997). ESS school coordinators, however, devised several creative programming ideas to attract teens. One middle school program decided to begin charging an activity fee in the hope that it would build youth's commitment to attend. Other programs found that teens enjoy organizing and participating in special events such as community service neighborhood clean-ups, running their own clubs and working with younger youth as tutors, mentors or ESS staff. Older youth are also drawn to programs that assist them with job readiness and placement. Offering teen programs with flexible open-door policies along with opportunities for leadership and loosely guided autonomy seems most effective. Two of the high school programs that offer student-run teen clubs give students the responsibility to develop their own club names, rules and activities. While it seems that in most cases having a specific program image or identity is not the main force influencing success in recruiting, it does appear to help with older youth, especially those in high school.

Availability of Other Programs. A second major factor affecting the demand for ESS programs is the availability of other youth programs. Programs found that when several organizations are already running well-established daily activities for youth, school coordinators have much more difficulty attracting students.

> *[This] is one of the best cities for youth activities. There's so much for kids to do that you kind of have to compete for them to get into your program.*
>
> —School Coordinator

> *Our real barrier to recruiting students has to do with the area. It's so concentrated with different camps that we end up competing for the students. The other programs have more access to the students because they're located in the school* ***and they have transportation*** *[emphasis added]. There are two housing projects directly across the street from one of the programs, so naturally they get a lot of those students.*
>
> —School Coordinator

Availability of Transportation. The second quote points to another commonly mentioned recruitment barrier—transportation. As we will discuss more fully in Chapter V, the inability of many programs to provide transportation home is a major barrier to participation for a large proportion of students. In many schools, parents are required to pick up their children at 5:00p.m. or 6:00p.m. Parents who are working at those times or families that do not have cars may thus not be able to enroll their children in the program. We expect that this may have disproportionately been an issue for the poorest families.

While most of these new programs ran into difficulty recruiting students, a handful of programs did not. They easily reached their capacities. These programs were located in cities with few other accessible opportunities for children and youth, and/or with schools that had after-school programs in the past. This latter fact is evidence that enrollment does grow over time as programs mature and gain strong reputations. In these cities, we were able to observe enrollment challenges that other programs will face in the future when they reach capacity. For example, if more youth want to participate than there is capacity for, how will decisions be made about who will be selected? Will priority be given to youth who previously enrolled in the program or will needier students be given preference? So far in the handful of programs that are already at capacity, an effort is made to maintain slots for youth who had previously participated in ESS. In this way, service provision carries some continuity for the youth and their families who made an early commitment to the program. Overall, however, programs seemed unclear about how they would proceed in the face of heavy program demand. Strategies may become clearer as a growing number of programs approach this stage in their third year of operation.

Summary

Located in poor neighborhoods, the ESS programs are reaching thousands of racially and ethnically diverse low-income children. We were impressed that, even though this was the first year of operation, most programs served a hundred or more children. The Beacon centers enrolled even more, averaging almost 275 children per center, perhaps because they had more resources to hire staff and activity providers.

Typically, the more involved children and their families are the ones who first learn about and walk through the doors of any new program or opportunity. So, too, it appears in ESS. Evidence suggests that more involved students were among the first cohort to enroll. However, this is <u>not</u> to suggest that many needy students did not enroll. Our evidence indicates that approximately two-thirds of the enrolled students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. Rather, this common tendency made coordinators realize that they needed to use more targeted recruitment strategies to reach the least involved students and their families. Over time, as the coordinators have more time for recruitment, even more of the hard-to-reach students will be drawn into programs. The evaluation will continue to follow this key issue.

Demand for the program was strong in the first year of operation, but not overwhelming in most cities. A number of factors contribute to this. Probably most important is that the programs are fairly new: they have not yet established strong reputations among the parents and teachers of the school, and because word-of-mouth referrals are the most effective, we expect that, over time, recruitment will become somewhat easier. Second, programs must reach not only the children but also their parents; communication with parents is challenging and often requires direct contact. Third, older youth and their parents appear to be less attracted to the program than are elementary school children. Lastly, transportation issues limit demand for the program. Many parents are unable to pick up their children at the end of the day and feel uncomfortable about having them walk home alone at 5:00p.m. or 6:00p.m.

Although the programs faced many challenges during their first full implementation year, they developed many creative strategies for recruiting youth. We have no doubt that over time more of the students in the schools will be drawn into the programs.

V. Addressing the Challenges in Schools

> *[Schools are] islands set apart from the mainland of life by a deep moat.....A drawbridge is lowered at certain periods during the day in order that the part-time inhabitants may cross over to the island in the morning and back to the mainland at night.*[8]
>
> —William G. Carr, 1942 Address to the National Congress of Parents and Teachers

The ESS programs join a growing cadre of after-school programs located in public schools (Dryfoos, 1998). Indeed, a study done by the National Center for Education Statistics in 1997 found that approximately 30 percent of all public schools and over 40 percent of center-city schools have after-school activities.[9] Since that time, many new school-based after-school programs have emerged around the country, fueled to no small degree by the growth in federal funding—for example, the Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Center funding, the Justice Department's Safe Schools/Healthy Students funding, and the Health and Human Services Child Care and Development Block Grant. States and many foundations are also encouraging communities to develop school-based programs.

Locating these programs in schools brings many strengths—credibility, child-friendly environments, specialized facilities (computer labs and gyms)—but it also brings unique challenges. These challenges range from a perception that principals and school personnel disagree with program goals, to the challenges of keeping school space clean and well-maintained, to making decisions about how youth will get to and from school. Specifically, we address the following questions:

- Do principals and program staff have different goals?
- What challenges arise with regard to using school space? What can programs do to address the challenges?
- What challenges arise with regard to transportation? What solutions have programs found?

In this chapter, we discuss these challenges, their underlying causes and how programs attempt to minimize them.

Shared or Conflicting Goals

In all four models, a partnership is required between a nonprofit organization, such as a university or a youth-serving organization, and the school district. One of the first—and often ongoing—challenges school-based programs must face is to establish enough trust between school personnel and the staff of the nonprofit to permit implementation of the program to proceed as smoothly as possible.

As we talked with people in the ESS cities at the beginning of the initiative, tensions between school personnel and CBO staff implementing the ESS school initiative became obvious. Some CBO personnel reported that principals and teachers were only interested in their students' test scores and did not support the broad youth development focus of the initiative. School district administrations were often wary of allowing CBOs into the schools, and principals complained that the CBOs did not adequately support the school's mission.

In a series of in-depth interviews with staff from the fiscal and lead agencies as well as from the schools, however, we learned that the two groups actually hold very similar goals for the initiative. The major themes that emerged from the interviews are increasing academic enrichment experiences, increasing youth development experiences, building the community and strengthening community/school partnerships. And although there is considerable diversity both across and within the cities with respect to individuals' goals for the initiative, we found relatively little connection between individuals' views and the roles they took in the initiative.

Most people, school staff included, believe that an ideal after-school program should be a place for youth to engage in a range of productive activities, that it should be a collaboration between schools and communities, and that one of its productive activities should be engaging in learning opportunities. School personnel are only slightly more likely than are CBO staff to emphasize the provision of academic supports to students (26% vs. 21%). School personnel are much more likely, however, to emphasize the youth development promise of the programs. This tendency runs counter to the presumption held by some of the CBO personnel that school-based personnel emphasize academics in after-school programs to the exclusion of other kinds of positive activities. In fact, several principals and other school district staff suggested that the youth development aspects of the after-school programs complement the schools' academic mission:[10]

> *I don't really see the Beacons as enhancing education. There are two parts of education: cognitive learning and affective learning. The Beacon supports the cognitive learning, but really promotes the affective. It teaches kids how to be responsible, how to act with one another, interpersonal skills, how to learn. That is the set of skills that our population is desperately in need of. The other thing is that–I've been listening in these [Oversight Committee] meetings—they want Beacons to be academic, provide tutoring and so forth, and I am really opposed to that [because] our kids go to school seven hours/day, and it's intense learning. For them to go to an after-school class and do some tutoring is ridiculous...These kids need to have fun.*
>
> —Principal

Time and communication helped reconcile the perceived differences in goals. Also, when coordinators became aware during homework help times that some of their children could barely read or do math, they became more sympathetic to school staff's desire that at least some after-school time be devoted to academic enrichment. Principals and teachers who observed the behavior of certain problematic children improve after they started going to the after-school program also came to understand that the program was making these children more able to learn during class time.

Space and Programming

The availability and type of program space affects the type and quality of activities that can be offered. An obvious example of this occurred in several programs where the community asked for a swimming program but the school lacked ready access to a swimming pool. Similarly, if programs want to run a cooking class, an Internet class or art class, they require rooms with the appropriate accommodations.

Even when school space is available, it is not always ideal. Many ESS activities require open, multipurpose classrooms that can accommodate activities like aerobics or karate. Traditional classrooms crowded with 30 to 50 desks are ill-suited for such classes. The number of such activities is thus constrained by the availability of appropriate space. Multipurpose and special rooms are often already in considerable demand in schools and therefore, when possible, must be reserved in advance. School coordinators report that it is difficult to run several concurrent activities—homework help, story time and a dance class—in just one

multipurpose room, such as a cafeteria. In the beginning, as newcomers to the school, some programs found they were the first to be denied a scheduled use if the school had a last-minute request from a teacher for the room. The availability of appropriate space is critical to the character of the program.

The Access Problem

In seven of the 10 cities we visited, school coordinators mentioned that it is difficult to get the space they need for their program. The underlying causes for this friction between the program and the school are true capacity constraints, financial constraints and trust.

Overcrowded schools. In four cities, we found that these limitations are partly a result of already overcrowded conditions in the schools. In one ESS middle school in Minneapolis, built to accommodate 450, enrollment has grown to 800. Similarly, an ESS elementary school in Missoula that normally served 225 students had enrollment surge to 375 in Fall 1999. Student enrollment for the school district of Long Beach ballooned from 65,000 to over 90,000, and the partnering ESS elementary school, with a capacity of 360 students, had 900 youth in attendance and bused other neighborhood youth to schools that were less crowded. School facilities and equipment are already being heavily used. Even though the school principal is generous in sharing available space with the program, it is still extremely limited. The parent center, for example, is in the small foyer of the auditorium.

Not only must ESS compete with school staff's demands for often limited space after hours (for make-up tests and extra help sessions), but many of the schools we visited also host a variety of outside organizations, such as for-profit childcare programs or fee-for-service activities; all of whom need space. In this setting, ESS faces what some program coordinators reluctantly define as a competition for space. School administrators openly addressed the issue of making decisions about the use of space by various constituencies:

> *Space was a problem. This year it was a problem because we had so many agencies who wanted to use the gym at the same time that [the ESS program] wanted to run activities...Then we had teachers who wanted to use the library after school during the [ESS] homework club. It was probably good that people learned to share. We had the library split up—a teacher was doing testing while the homework club was going on.*
>
> —Principal

The need for trust. Overcrowded schools, however, are only part of the explanation of why space availability is a challenge for all the programs. Principals are held responsible for the physical integrity of the school plant, and are thus hesitant to let the program use school facilities unless they feel confident that school property will be respected. Limited in their capacity to finance the maintenance and expansion of school facilities, they commonly feel the need to restrict and monitor use of such special rooms as computer labs, libraries, auditoriums and gyms with newly coated floors:

> *Now, I'm not going to open my computer lab up to them. There's a lot of money in there. But, in general, classrooms are available to them.*
>
> —Principal

In addition, at least one principal worried that the students also would not be able to observe two sets of behavioral standards for the same place:

> *When you have a nonprofessional teacher, there's a difference in how those children react, behave and take care of the facility. The biggest thing I see is that it all does wear on the facility...If kids sit on a desk the next thing you know they'll be standing on it. It's the same thing with running in the hall. We have grandmas and older people in the school and if students are running around the hall and knock into someone it's a safety issue...My concern is that it might spill over into the daytime.*
>
> —Principal

Typically, in schools with sufficient space to share, we observed that the availability of school space for the program reflects the degree of trust the principal has in the coordinator and staff.

Even after gaining the trust of principals, access to some teachers' classrooms is limited or prohibited, particularly in schools where teachers' classrooms are permanently assigned. In part, teachers object to having to straighten up early on a morning after the after-school program uses their classrooms; in part, they worry about replacing supplies the program uses up, breaks or loses. The next section discusses several strategies school coordinators used to gain teachers' trust and deal with space challenges.

Strategies to Ameliorate Space Challenges

> *Sometimes teachers will say that they need their classrooms cleaned because the after-school program left them messy, and I'll go clean them right away...We're really responsive to that. If anything gets broken, which also happens, we'll replace it out of our budget. We won't ask questions about it, we'll just replace it. There's also a need to validate teachers' emotions when things like this happen. I can understand how they get upset about some of these things.*
>
> —School Coordinator

In desperately overcrowded schools, programs had limited capacity to address the challenges that the lack of space presented to them. However, even in those cases, coordinators found solutions. In some cases, coordinators turned to outside organizations to get access to space adjacent to school buildings, such as a social service office or a voluntary youth-serving organization. In other cases partnering organizations, like the YMCA, provided access to their facilities; in those cases, however, transportation problems had to be solved.

Mutual Flexibility. More commonly, when space was available, coordinators worked to develop trust with both school staff and principals. Doing so requires both patience and significant amounts of the coordinator's time spent developing relationships with principals and teachers. One program coordinator noted: "We use the classrooms of the teachers who are supportive of the program, we avoid the others."

Over time, most programs that started with weak relationships made progress in earning the confidence and trust of the principals and some teachers, thus gaining access to space. School coordinators noted the importance of communication, patience and flexibility:

> *To me the key to working with the school is to be flexible. Something that could be a problem if I didn't have an alternative plan is space. If the room [scheduled for ESS activities] is being used and I don't find out until the last minute, it can be annoying, but we find alternatives.*
>
> —School Coordinator

Program Staff with School Experience. One of the most important things a program can do to engender trust is to select staff, especially the coordinator, with experience in the school. From our research to date, it appears that the general background of the candidate —in, say, education or youth programming—does not affect how well school coordinators are able to operate their individual after-school programs. More important is the individual's relationships with relevant school personnel. For example, one school coordinator had been a student teacher in the school in which she later served as the coordinator. She said that her previous relationships with the principal and the teachers put her and the program in good standing with school staff and helped her gain access to facilities, teachers and even youth. In another school, the program coordinator had worked part time in the school (and continues to do so) coordinating community involvement. Her knowledge of the school's culture and relationships with the teachers, principals and custodians considerably eases the challenges of running the program.

After hiring three coordinators, one member of the city's management team concluded:

> *As it turned out, it was important to have the school principal selecting the program coordinator because the position can be filled by a "school-type" person.*
>
> —Management Team Member

The benefit of having prior experience with the school is not restricted to the very early period of program implementation. For example, at the end of the first school year, an assistant coordinator left and was replaced by someone who had worked in the school for several years prior to joining the program. His

addition helped the program's reputation and access in that school:

> *[My new assistant] has worked at [the school] for three years, he knows the school staff, the custodial staff. Everyone knows him, he's got an in with everyone in this school. He has a charming personality —wherever he goes and talks up Beacons, people fall in love with him and the Beacons...I think that's really going to help. [The principal] did give us a larger office that we'll be moving into.*
>
> —School Coordinator

The reaction of the principal to this hire illustrates how targeted hires can allay the very common concerns of principals, namely security and discipline:

> *One of the concerns that I had was that the people that were hired were not people that understood the school and the workings of the school. [They] have now hired [a new assistant] and he understands the culture of the school. He's wonderful, that was a great addition to the Beacon. He worked as a security guard here. I think that's going to make a change in the transition from school to Beacons ...when the kids are in the building [even after school] they have to know what the school's discipline is, and there has to be a happy medium. Hiring [him] is probably one of the best things that they've done.*
>
> —Principal

From the school's perspective, the value of hiring a trusted school "insider" is that he or she knows (and presumably will follow) the school rules and cultural norms. From the program's perspective, having at least one key staff member, preferably the program coordinator, who already has good relationships with the school and its staff can greatly improve the program's access to space, communication with teachers, and even its ability to recruit youth.

However, because principal turnover in the schools was quite high, trust levels did not always increase over time. When a new principal came into a school, program staff had to build new relationships and sometimes lost access they had once enjoyed. Building relationships with a new principal was a slow process because, in his or her first year, the principal often concentrated on core school-day tasks, giving little time to the after-school program. Building trust should thus be seen by coordinators as an ongoing process whose salience increases when programs begin or staff turn over.

We observed modest differences across the four models in the levels of trust between school staff and program staff. The WEPIC and Community Schools programs, in general, reported that relationships with principals are positive. More variation exists across the larger number of Bridges and Beacon schools, with trust high in some but low in others. The difference seems to be related to the degree to which principals are integral to the program. High integration is inherent in the Community Schools model, but not in the other models, where it is strongly encouraged, but not mandated. In Bridges and Beacons, however, we did see examples of high trust between principals and program staff—in all cases the principals were very involved in the programs and saw program activities as crucial supports for their youth.

Permanent Program Space

In the first year of operation, program space was transient. Most activities were shifted from room to room. In light of this turbulence, some programs coveted informal ownership of a space. Having permanent space, of course gives stability to the program, as well as a greater sense of belonging and membership to the youth. In a group interview, several program coordinators working in the same city discussed the merits of "owning" a classroom:

> *Coordinator 1:* We have a serious space problem. We didn't have a meeting room [for ESS students]. We used the cafeteria. Just this summer we got our own room and it's been really nice because we can hang things on the walls and they stay there. We can put up rules [that the students decided on] and they stay. It's made a big difference with the kids. But in the fall we'll lose the room.

Coordinator 2: The kids feel a sense of ownership [when they have their own room].

Coordinator 3: Yeah, they build responsibility...and there are no complaints if we used all the glue or used all the paint. We've gotten a good response from kids. They really like having our own room with our pictures up on the walls and our rules. With our own space there's a stronger club feel.

To date, few programs have gained unrestricted access to school space. These rare cases occurred during the summer when schools were out of session and fewer school staff members were on hand to monitor facility use. At the end of the first year of implementation, it seems that while most ESS programs are becoming increasingly welcomed guests in their schools, they continue to seek the equal membership, sense of belonging and informal ownership that strengthen progress toward sustainability.

Custodial Maintenance of School Space

All the ESS school staff we spoke with were strongly aware of their reliance on custodians—the keepers of the keys. One school coordinator identified custodial staff as equal to principals as "the folks who can make and break us." In some cases, failure to obtain full support has meant that programs were temporarily shut down in three or four schools:

A year ago [one of the programs] was shut down...The custodial director didn't want anyone in there if a janitor was not on duty. [The concern is that] they are in the school without the custodial staff on duty. We are responsible for what goes on in our facility. We risk liability—like if a kid slipped on the floor and got hurt because the snow wasn't removed due to the lack of a custodian.

—School District Superintendent

I love the custodians. The only problem is that we're on their schedule. [The day-time custodian] leaves at 2:00p.m. and if his replacement doesn't come in after Eon then we have to get out.

—School Coordinator

However, the issue of custodians is not just about needing to build good relationships. The real need for cleaning and maintaining shared school space affects its availability. The ESS programs are no exception and few have been able to adequately address it over their first year of operations. The longer-term issue of sustaining facility infrastructure is a problem confronting all schools that extend their hours beyond the traditional six- to eight-hour day, and is thus an issue that the oversight teams must address.

The problems are primarily ones of money and logistics. If the program uses space not in use every day, or uses it for more hours, the schools face additional cleaning demands. In addition, since the programs operate outside of normal school hours, the schedule of cleaning must change, which often has cost implications. Each ESS collaborative has to determine how these costs will be shared. Second, in trying to minimize these extra costs, school coordinators often curtail activities more than they want to or do not offer adult activities in the evening when more adults and parents can attend (rooms must be empty for cleaning during the hours that custodians normally work). Lastly, issues of liability and compliance with custodial union rules are entwined with these practical concerns.

The scheduling of room cleanings even more than access to space, surfaced as the most pressing issue for programs. School custodians have set work schedules that enable them to clean all the needed school spaces in their allocated time, assuming most of them are empty at the close of the regular school day. The presence of ESS after-school programs means that classrooms are not empty at their usual time. Thus custodians have to juggle their schedules and often have less time to clean. Similarly, in the summers, custodians traditionally rely on having a block of time

when school is out of session to conduct a comprehensive cleaning of classroom spaces. The presence of a summer program means that less of this type of maintenance takes place with the given level of resources.

One principal described his concerns about cleaning the school:

> *Custodians essentially lose a month of cleaning time. They can't get in there to strip the rooms, clean the walls and do the carpeting. We lack the people power to have the school ready in the fall the way it should be...I think it may require more personnel. We're in a crunch and they tell us to do more with less but there'll be a point when that doesn't work.*

The superintendent of the same school district reinforced these concerns:

> *I hear that the usage of the schools is extensive enough that we don't have the custodial structure to keep up with the demand. When we reach the point that we can't keep up with it, and we may reach this point, what we will have to deal with is the definition of the level of service custodians can provide... Our people are used to cleanliness and we can't sustain that [with usage so high]. So we may have to go to a different level of upkeep than is currently expected from custodians. This will affect the program.*

A few of the school coordinators we talked to did not fully understand the problem. One told us that if you break down the damage and extra maintenance done by hour-of-use, you would see that wear and tear occur at a normal rate. The problem, however, is that resource-strapped school districts have no extra money for maintenance.

Programs deal with increased cleaning demands and scheduling conflicts in similar ways. Often they attempt to stretch resources, having the custodians clean more in the same number of hours. At one school, custodial staff stay for an additional unpaid hour to support the needs of the ESS program. Many ESS staff also informally take on cleaning responsibilities, some more willingly than others. Some school coordinators adopt custodial work as a part of their responsibilities, as in the case of the coordinator who dropped everything if a teacher complained about a mess left in the classroom; others take on these duties more reluctantly. One coordinator explained:

> *I would like to see us not having to kowtow to the engineering staff. We're very aware that our good relationship could change. For instance, the evening janitor decided that he would vacuum the big media center before the kids come in for the after-school program, instead of after. Now our coordinator or some kids will help us vacuum.*
>
> —School Coordinator

Both of these strategies, which hold down cost in the short term, push some programs into the uncomfortable position of overlooking union rules and risking liability for incidents that occur on a custodian's shift but not necessarily under his or her supervision. Agency partners and activity providers described some of these situations:

> *We were creating scuff marks, so we were mopping the gym floor once a week. Then the engineers came and told me we were breaking union rules—we're not supposed to pick up a broom.*
>
> —School Coordinator

> *There's something that says if there are more than 50 kids in the building, there have to be two engineers. We've stretched the rules to avoid paying overtime. In the bigger picture I don't have the money for it...but I do think it needs to be considered.*
>
> —School Coordinator

Rules related to liability vary from city and, perhaps more germane, stringency about upholding these rules fluctuates from district to district. Some programs are willing to bend, stretch and overlook certain restrictions, while others demand full compliance.

Locating funds to cover the costs of added custodial support is consistently challenging. In the early stages of planning, custodial maintenance was designed to be an in-kind contribution of the school, but no costs beyond what the school traditionally spent were foreseen. In approximately half the schools, no funds are allocated from the ESS budget for services. In the other half, programs spend approximately $8,000 to cover Saturday or evening hours. One of the few principals who has solved the custodial problem spent a full year lobbying her district to switch a custodian from daytime to evening hours. The switch was successful and resulted in the school staying open to offer adult evening classes, but it required an additional $7,000 in salary for the night custodian.

Resolutions of these complexities of school maintenance remain unresolved in almost all cases. In moving toward program sustainability, it lingers as a critical concern for many programs and principals.

Transportation

Like the issues of school space and custodial support, transportation is a critical factor that influences program structure and capacity. In particular, it affects the cost of the program, who participates and the hours of youth programming.

Well over half the programs were pressed to settle with serving the youth who could make it to and from their programs using available options.

The Legacy of School Busing

Programs operating in schools where a majority of youth live within safe walking distance are at a considerable advantage. Yet the nature of urban schools makes the likelihood of this rare—the history of school busing laws reveals why.

In the 1970s, state-mandated busing was introduced as a promising remedy to cases of apartheid in American education. Students of color, once isolated in neighborhood public schools, boarded buses and traveled across cities to attend predominately white schools. While, in some cities, busing continues to serve as an important response to segregation, in others its need is becoming obsolete. Ongoing demographic shifts resulting from white flight and increasing urban minority populations mean that nonwhite students constitute a growing majority in urban American schools. As a result, policies on busing are being reconsidered. For example, in Boston, where the nonwhite population in public schools has reached 80 percent, busing will be eliminated in six years.

Yet regardless of the city, the negative legacy of busing remains. The number of neighborhood schools have diminished and fewer youth walk. The permanence of school structures only feeds these difficulties by creating a mismatch between heavily youth-populated neighborhoods and schools. School buildings were originally built in locations to serve their surrounding neighborhoods, but as many neighborhood populations age or shift, school-aged populations have diminished. Given the prohibitive costs of building schools in new or growing neighborhoods with high numbers of youth, students are bused out to old buildings.

In four of the 10 research cities, students who want to attend ESS programs but normally rely on school busing require alternative means of transportation to participate in the extended hours of the program. Although three of the cities have late buses available at the middle or high school level, using the late buses—set up primarily for activities such as extra-curricular sports—requires that the ESS program end before the late bus leaves. In addition, all the programs struggle with providing adequate transportation for off-site activities (such as swimming or hiking) and field trips.

They either have to limit the number of trips or not offer a desired activity at all. Additionally, staff, volunteers and parents who live a moderate distance from the school are limited in the degree to which they can participate in programs if they lack ready and affordable modes of transportation.

Cost

The main reason transportation surfaced as such a paramount concern is cost. Paying for additional busing is expensive and, in almost all cases, sufficient funding was not allotted to this service during the planning stages. In only one case was availability of transportation considered in the school selection process. In the rest of the programs, it emerged as a growing concern for which programs are largely underprepared:

> *I don't think we have a task force or a focused piece on transportation, it's more as we're stumbling into it [that we think about it].*
>
> —School Coordinator

> ***Was transportation discussed in planning?*** *Not enough. There was a sense that you would have kids within walking distance.*
>
> —Planning Committee Member

The added requirements and costs of transportation are extensive. One program estimated the real costs of transportation to be three times what was originally budgeted. Another program calculated the costs of after-school busing to be $50,000 for the school year and $100 a day during the summer. Such daunting expenses contributed to one principal's proposal to the management team that the school make the ESS program a mandatory part of the school day, so the school district would have to pay for busing. [This proposal was not accepted.] Coordinators expressed frustration at how unwieldy the problem is:

> *If you want to keep people after school longer and later you have to consider how they're going to get home. If there isn't any money to get people home, are we just spinning our wheels? It's not just a matter of time, it's a dollar a trip on the [public] buses. Some kids don't have $20 a month.*
>
> —School Coordinator

The Public Transportation Option

Numerous programs have considered using public transportation, but to our knowledge, *none* of the ESS schools have gone this route. The expense would be less formidable, but as mentioned earlier, it would still involve additional cost. However, the main reason, to date, that public transportation has not been used is that programs have raised concerns about the safety and accessibility of public transit routes, particularly for elementary school students.

Consequences

The consequences of inadequate transportation for ESS participants are substantial. Youth who live beyond walking distance from the school and lack adults who can pick them up simply can not participate in the programs. In cities like Minneapolis, where 90 to 95 percent of the student population relies on busing, many youth face the possibility of being left out. Yet the situation seems equally problematic in programs like Savannah's, where 25 percent of the students rely on busing. Also, even in schools where students normally walk, early darkness in the winter may mean that students cannot stay after school. School coordinators and program partners consistently highlighted their concerns:

> *It's a major problem. Lots of kids say they can't participate 'cause no one can pick them up.*
>
> —School Coordinator

> *We have to limit the program to 150 [students] a day because of transportation. We have only so many buses.*
>
> —School Coordinator

> *We didn't offer transportation in the school year and there were kids we missed. I know there are kids who participated last summer but not during school...they live far away. And I hear from parents that it's a challenge getting kids here.*
>
> —School Coordinator

ESS coordinators and providers also lament the lack of transportation because students who require after-hours busing are frequently those who could most benefit from added support; their parents work evening shifts and can neither arrange a pick up nor help with school work at home. We speculate that these are also frequently children of lower-income and single-parent families.

Program cutbacks are another consequence of inadequate transportation. At one program summer activities began a week late because transportation was not yet available. For all cities except one, the possibility of field trips and off-site activities are curtailed because funds for such excursions are limited. We speculate that some programs may wholly discount the possibility of offering before-school programming because costs for early busing are prohibitive. Locating properly licensed drivers and securing insurance for vehicles are added challenges—and all of these challenges grow as programs expand and more youth want to participate.

Solutions

The immediacy of the transportation issue has pressed programs to develop solutions. Some strategies are temporary, while others may be sustainable in the long term. In the best of circumstances, school districts are able to offer monetary or in-kind support for late busing. In Jacksonville, the school district already had late busing in operation for other school activities, which they could then extend to ESS youth. In Boston, the principal lobbied the district for a year to provide late busing; it finally agreed, with the stipulation that buses leave the school before 5:00pm. In Minneapolis, the ESS summer program strategically dovetailed with summer school classes so that summer school students who stayed for ESS would return home on school district-funded buses. Through this arrangement, the Minneapolis summer program is able to serve a large group of youth, but it has a major drawback: students not enrolled in summer school are unable to participate in ESS activities.

While some school districts contribute sizable amounts of support for transportation, others do not. Either budgets are stretched and money is unavailable, or there are restrictions on how transit money may be spent. For example, in Missoula, the school district grants transportation funding only to academic programs—ESS is considered non academic. In these and other cases, programs turn to community partners for transportation support. An ESS school in Minneapolis developed a partnership with the Community Education program whereby they split the costs for late busing during the school year. A school in Missoula collaborates with the local Head Start program to share busing. Other programs capitalize on their relationships with the YMCA or a partnering university to gain the occasional use of vans for off-site trips. Coordinators of the Savannah ESS program sought the support of a local car dealership, which sold them a van at cost.

Other solutions seem more like patchwork. At programs in Central Falls and Missoula, some staff use their own vehicles to transport youth. One program applies ESS funds to transportation costs but thus limits funds available for programming.

Within this context, the transportation challenges for ESS programs fester. Without secured ways to transport bus-dependent youth to and from activities, before-school, after-school, weekend and summer programs become less viable and ultimately discriminatory. And as programs continue to work toward creative solutions to these transportation difficulties, the evidence suggests that long-term solutions rest in the capacity of cities and school districts to shoulder financial responsibility for Extended-Service programs.

Adding Coordination Staff to Address Logistical Challenges

The challenges we have discussed in this chapter relate to the use of the physical facility and the transportation needs of students. In addition to being problems in and of themselves, they add substantially to the school coordinators' workload, thereby increasing the coordinators' roles and responsibilities. Along with identifying, creating, staffing and scheduling activities, supervising providers and ensuring that the programs are running smoothly, the coordinators also have to focus on custodial issues (even going so far as to do some cleaning themselves) and transportation. In reality, school coordinators spend far more time fulfilling their responsibilities than anyone had expected prior to implementation. This section discusses the plans that cities made to staff their programs and the changes they made to those plans as implementation got under way.

Planned Staffing Patterns and Challenges

At the beginning of implementation, many cities began running two to three hours of after-school programming. This schedule implied that the school coordinator would be providing or managing activities approximately 15 hours a week. If coordinators were hired half-time, 20 to 25 hours a week, they would have 5 to 10 additional hours a week for communication and planning. Among the intensive research programs, originally one of the Community Schools, one of the Beacons programs (with four schools), and two of the three Bridges to Success schools (for a total of eight schools) decided to employ half-time coordinators. In the remaining Bridges city, there are half-time coordinators in two of the five schools. When more resources were available, the coordinator's time was often supplemented with an assistant (in four Bridges schools). However, almost immediately, it was recognized that it is extremely difficult to start an after-school program and run it well with a half-time coordinator. Planning time is insufficient, as is the time necessary to recruit volunteers.

Project directors who oversee schools with half-time coordinators came to see that the quality of programming suffered:

> *It's also been difficult because in the original grant the [school] coordinators were planned to work part time. It's unrealistic to have one part-time staff person with 200 kids.*
>
> —Project Director

Project directors also told us that coordinator burnout and turnover are of much greater concern when these front-line workers are half time. When we talked to the half-time coordinators, most of them were actually working closer to full time, although they were not getting paid for it. These are individuals who are passionate about their jobs, but programs lose these dedicated staff when they leave for full-time jobs.

In response to the challenge of keeping coordinators and providing a coherent program, some programs have reallocated resources to increase the coordinator's hours:

> *If we really wanted to integrate day and after school into a real extended-service school, we need a [school] coordinator who knows the teachers. So we...revisited the job description [to] hire someone full time and [who was a] certified teacher to get the input of the day teachers....After a couple of months of testing, we'll revisit the external coordinator issue.*
>
> —Principal

To pay for a full-time school coordinator, this program decided not to hire a half-time person to do fundraising and make links with external organizations, but rather to shift these funds to the school coordinator. The management team worried about not having someone to fundraise, so they revisited their decision throughout the year, hoping that as the program matured they would be able to reduce the school coordinator's hours. However, they found they needed a school coordinator full time through the entire first year.

Adding Time or Staff

Other cities quickly tried to develop other sources of funding by writing grants or reallocating resources. As a result, by the beginning of the second year, 7 of the 13 half-time positions were made full time. In addition, in cities which retained part-time coordinators, decision-makers reported that they were working to increase the school coordinator's time.

In the Community Schools and Beacons cities, which planned to have full-time coordinators from the beginning, school coordinators noted that even their full-time hours are very long and insufficient for the amount of work to be done:

> *My schedule? from 8:00a.m. to 9:00p.m. It's supposed to be 40 per week...with me leaving two hours before the Beacons closes. But it's hard to leave. The kids have to have adult supervision, have to have transportation. My morning is taken up with meetings or office work...meeting at [the local intermediary] for coordinators meetings, a management meeting at [the lead agency], youth component meetings with principals on a regular basis, meeting with my staff. I go to a lot of community things—like CBO monthly meetings, or with the hospital.*
>
> —School Coordinator

> *The biggest challenge to operating the program? For me, it's the time. In an ideal world I would like to have more time to do things. Right now, it's just kind of putting out fires.*
>
> —School Coordinator

In response, most of the Beacon Schools are gravitating toward an arrangement in which there is a full-time school coordinator and a full- or half-time assistant. Once the assistant is trained and reliable, the coordinator and the assistant can stagger their hours to cover the entire day without putting in too many extra hours:

> *We've both full time...We are open 'til 8:00p.m. on Monday through Thursday. So we switch off. [He] comes in in the morning and leaves at 5:00p.m.. I'll come in at noon and leave at 9:00p.m..*
>
> —School Coordinator

Coordination at the schools is therefore a much bigger job than many of the planning team members imagined as they were setting up their programs. Along with other needs for resources—custodial support, building maintenance and transportation—getting the programs on the ground proved more difficult and costly than expected.

Summary

The programming challenges faced during implementation have three major commonalities: they were formidable, they were typically unanticipated by the local players during the planning stages, and they occurred with consistency across programs, regardless of model type. Each of the 10 intensive research programs faced at least one if not all four of the main challenges. They include gaining access to programming space, arranging for the maintenance of that space, providing transportation to and from programs for participants, and ensuring sufficient staff support to run the demanding programs.

These issues readily rose to the top of programs' agendas and pressed programs to work in committed and creative ways to develop solutions. In many cases nurturing relationships with key school personnel (principals, teachers and custodians) was at the heart of gaining access to school space. Our data show that while schools and CBO staff typically shared a similar set of goals for ESS programs, the level of trust at which schools first held ESS programs was less consistent. Program staff often recognized the need to be patient in developing their relationships with school staff and to explore the use of alternative facilities. Some programs also discovered that involving school principals in the hiring of ESS school coordinators and choosing staff who were already known by the school smoothed communication issues and facilitated access to school space. In most cases access to school space increased over time, as schools grew more comfortable with the programs and program staff. Yet in school districts burdened by over-crowding, space remains a scarce commodity.

The challenge of ensuring the maintenance of school space was another issue eased by the careful development of relationships with school staff, particularly custodians and principals who might serve as intermediaries. In the day-to-day operation of programs, the main concern is in coordinating the ESS use of space with custodians' cleaning schedules. But in the larger context of implementing ESS programs, the most pressing issue is ensuring that schools can sustain the increased wear and tear on their facilities' infrastructures resulting from the additional hours of use. As programs and schools faced the challenge of locating additional funds to cover the costs of custodians' longer work days, they readily recognized that meeting maintenance needs is central to sustaining programs.

The third challenge, transportation, was perhaps the most formidable because its remedy required the most extra funding and its consequence was that some youth, often the most needy, simply could not participate in ESS activities.

Programs have learned that addressing these and other challenges involved in implementation requires larger than anticipated investments of time from all initiative partners and, in particular, school coordinators. In response, some programs made the decision to switch part time coordinator positions to full time—again, resulting in an increased and critical program expense.

The relational and financial natures of the challenges made resolutions slow, time-consuming and, in the most difficult of cases, not doable by program staff alone. As programs continue to mature, we anticipate that they will develop creative solutions to the issues at hand. Yet, we also foresee that without added financial support to mediate challenges like transportation, custodial support and full staffing, achieving sustainability is at risk.

VI. Building Partnerships in the Planning Period

This chapter describes the experiences of the planning teams as they got under way. The planning period was a time of both great enthusiasm and struggle. Cities were excited by the opportunity to create comprehensive programs, but considerable relationship building needed to be done to get a range of institutions to the table. In particular, negotiating with school districts proved challenging in some cities. To investigate the factors that facilitate building partnerships, we interviewed many of the key players to get their perspective on the planning process.

From these interviews, we address the following questions:

- Who joined the planning teams and what motivated their involvement?
- Does initial motivation relate to whether people stay?
- How did the cities forge successful partnerships with school districts?
- Does previous experience with collaborative efforts ease planning?
- What kinds of technical assistance proved useful to cities during their planning period?

Why Collaborate

In the past 10 years, philanthropic and community-building institutions have begun urging nonprofit and public social service agencies to collaborate. At a time when the ways that schools, social service institutions and families have traditionally prepared youth for their economic and civic futures appear to be inadequate, the established boundaries and functions of such institutions are shifting as new responsibilities are added or old ones curtailed. Schools find themselves responsible for imparting more cultural knowledge to larger groups of students. Due to shifts in the labor market, in which more mothers of young children are working for longer hours, families have less time to take on the roles of transmitting culture, knowledge and norms to their children. These shifts have resulted in a long-term debate about how to fulfill our responsibilities to youth.

Collaborative efforts also come at a period when Americans have decided to funnel relatively fewer resources to public social services, forcing those who provide and fund such services to think about ways to conserve or stretch available funds. At the same time, researchers

and advocates of child development have succeeded in creating a public understanding of the complex, interdependent nature of child and adolescent development. As a result of all these forces, efforts have been made to weave together different kinds of services to provide adequate supports for youth.

Broad social trends and discourse have therefore created an environment in which increased collaboration may be a useful strategy for delivering services. In this climate, policymakers, funders and practitioners have identified specific goals they hope to achieve through increased collaboration.

First, providers and funders hope to avoid service duplication and service gaps, especially when funding for social programs is limited. Although some duplication may be desirable to ensure that the target populations have adequate access to services, too much may cause philanthropic and public funds to be diverted from necessary but not currently fashionable services, while heavily funded services may be undersubscribed.

A second motivation is the desire to draw on the resources of existing institutions for new social programs or initiatives. Getting new social programs started is an arduous and time-consuming process, especially if the programs are complex and require expertise and resources that may be more plentiful in institutions other than those that initiate the programs. While it is possible for institutions to build expertise in new areas, it may be easier to enlist the support of institutions that already have expertise. Partnerships thus become a way of increasing access to resources.

Third, many collaborative efforts assume that sustaining the work of initiatives beyond the initial funding period will be more successful if multiple institutions are involved. This is particularly important when philanthropic funds or nonrenewable public funds are being used. Unless initiatives and programs identify new ways to fund their work, the chances are good that the efforts will cease shortly after the funding period ends. Partnerships may increase access to financial resources during and after the initial grant period, since different institutions have access to different sources of financial support.

Related to the work of sustaining programs, partnership building is also perceived as a way to publicize new social programs, thus attracting new resources. When partners come to the table to discuss multidimensional and complex initiatives over a period of time, they are better prepared to act as "carriers" of important information.

All these factors contributed to the development of collaborations in the Extended-Service Schools Initiative. The request for proposals sent out by the models for implementation grants listed six selection criteria, three of which concerned the need for cooperation and collaboration among groups of people and agencies. They were:

- **Evidence of sustainability.** Ideally, the proposed program will have the potential to dramatically increase *the use of facilities in school buildings and existing resources* [our emphasis] for low-income young people in a sustainable way.

- **Evidence of community involvement.** Programs and decision-making bodies should be representative [of] every level of the community they serve.

- **Commitment of participating schools to supporting the Adaptation project** as demonstrated by the interest of teachers and the willingness of administrators to support an extended-service school consistent with the projects' goals.

These criteria were sufficiently general to cover all the models, while emphasizing the importance of partnerships in implementing the local ESS initiative and finding resources to sustain it over time.

Who Came to the Table and Why?

Prior to providing funds for implementing ESS, cities received planning grants. Fund staff believed that program implementation would be stronger if sites took six to nine months to convene potential partners and make initial implementation decisions. In addition, the design of ESS emphasizes the creation of collaborations among providers, funders, schools and government agencies as a way of creating multifaceted and sustainable after-school programs. Thus, the planning period was a time to create and strengthen links and partnerships.

As many researchers and practitioners have found over the past 15 years, interinstitutional collaboration is a challenging and time-consuming process that may be fraught with tension. Despite the inherent challenges, a number of urban policymakers and executives of institutions that provide services continue to initiate and maintain such efforts because the potential benefits outweigh the considerable challenges.

The earliest challenge consists of finding institutional partners willing to dedicate administrative or executive staff time to plan an initiative and dedicate resources to implementing it. Cities convened high-level executives from governmental agencies, community-based organizations and funders to begin planning. Since much of the programming was to take place in the schools, most sites also deemed it necessary to invite school personnel—either school district administrators or principals or both—to the planning team. Nonetheless, the specific mix of planning team members in each community—and more importantly, the key decision-makers for ESS within that mix—varied across cities.

Partners had a number of motivations for coming to the table. A few, especially those who were instrumental in introducing the initiative to their cities, came with visions of increased or better integrated school-community partnerships:

> *Way back, I started out with a first grade class; I thought I would be able to save these kids....but I didn't know where to start...I didn't have enough resources and I didn't know what to do. I got a master's degree in Special Education; but after all of that, I knew I couldn't do it all myself. It was a community responsibility and the school had to teach the kids.*
>
> —Principal

While this principal was driven by a belief that it is necessary to fulfill youth's physical and emotional needs as well as their educational needs, other school district personnel saw ESS as a way of enhancing the educational mission of the school in the context of after-school programs:

> *It's needed, it was also a great opportunity to change our philosophy of after-school programming...[Before,] many programs that ran in the schools ran independent of the school improvement team. Many programs did not have a direct link to the schools or the district's strategic plan. Thirdly, most importantly from the principals' point of view, the schools were bursting at the seams with people doing things after school that were good, but nobody was tracking it. There was no central location for knowledge of what was happening in their school.*
>
> —School District Administrator

Partners from CBOs hoped to expand the kind of youth development programming they already offered by drawing on the physical or human resources of the schools. American public schools are underutilized public resources, often open for only six or seven hours a day in communities that may lack the physical resources in which to provide youth programs. Thus, school buildings were perceived by community-based organizations as potential resources:

> *We don't want to build buildings, we want to be collaborators. Two of our three city locations are in city buildings; we have the wherewithal to do capital fund-raising, but we wanted to collaborate more, be more accessible.*
>
> —Youth-Serving Organization Administrator

But, as discussed in Chapter V, getting access to schools is often difficult. Some ESS partners saw the initiative as a way of approaching the schools:

> *We were looking at expanding into schools anyway, and were wondering how to approach the schools, and then this came along. Getting into the school has not always been easy, I heard from other [affiliates] that have tried, and when I told my colleagues about how easy it was for us to get in via this project (i.e., the ESS Adaptation Initiative), they said, "you are lucky to have such a principal and school superintendent that are so supportive."*
>
> —Youth-Serving Organization Administrator

Still others began their collaborative work simply because their organization was invited, and they were appropriately placed to participate. Such people usually were administrators or executives in key institutions, such as large youth-serving organizations and public institutions that may provide funding and crucial support:

> *I know about it from our executive who is connected in the city. She was invited to become involved in the Beacons by the Youth Coordinating Board about two years ago. We both started [going] to some of the meetings with all these entities to talk about what was going on. [My executive director] asked me to be part of that because it was a youth development initiative.*
> —Youth-Serving Organization Administrator

> *They wanted a representative from the mayor's office and I do a lot of coordination of youth activities for the city.*
> —Mayor's Office Staff Member

Thus, there were a variety of interrelated motivations for getting involved in the initiative. No single motivation dominated. Of 34 planning team members interviewed, 10 reported that they came to the table because they hoped to extend their ongoing work with youth through a school/community collaboration. Nine said they saw the potential for resources—both in terms of building space and funding for programs. And another 10 came because they were invited.[11]

Differences in motivation among planning team members appeared to correlate with the different institutions. Not surprisingly, administrators from the local United Ways, other local funders and large CBOs, who often generated initial local interest in the initiative, were interested in the initiative because it extends the work they are already doing. School district administrators were much more likely to report that they came because they saw the possibility of getting more resources into the schools.

Two or more years into the initiative, why people first got involved appears not to predict future involvement. Some of those who went on to become key implementation partners originally came to the table because they thought resources for their existing programs would be available. Others who came looking for resources did not receive as much as they had expected, and dropped out over time. Others who were initially wary remained committed. What appeared to be far more important than the initial motivation was what happened after people got to the table.

What Facilitated or Impeded Early Collaborations with Schools?

The collaborations faced a number of challenges in stabilizing the membership of the collaborative groups and moving forward with planning. The most difficult collaboration to forge among planning team members proved to be that between CBOs and school districts. Before concrete decisions about the scope and substance of the local initiative could be made, a number of issues relating to the dynamics of the collaboration had to be addressed. As the city collaboratives began to meet, the question of who would make decisions and control resources became a pressing issue.

In 6 of the 10 cities visited, the initiative planned to implement the programs in more than one school in the local school district. This was largely a model difference: both the Beacons and the Bridges to Success models involve multiple schools in one city, whereas the Community Schools model calls for partnership with a single school. In theory, the WEPIC model could include multiple schools, but in ESS only one school per city was involved in the local WEPIC adaptations.

The number of schools involved in a local collaboration was an important factor in determining the extent to which the school district administration became active in initiative planning. In sites in which a single school was involved (e.g., the Community Schools and some WEPIC sites), the partnership with the school was more likely to involve local school personnel, such as the principal and key teachers. In contrast, in cities in which multiple schools were involved, the school district administration became a crucial partner during the planning phase.

The challenges to introducing school district personnel to the initiative and nurturing their enthusiasm and support for the initiative varied across cities. In some

Table 6.1
Motivation for Getting Involved in the ESS Adaptation Planning Process

Role	Invited	Access to Resources	ESS Extends Current Work	Other
School personnel	5	7	1	1
CBO or government agency personnel	5	2	9	3

cities, building relationships with the local school district proved particularly difficult:

> *Initially, we were asking, "How can we know it will be a quality program if we don't supervise?" Some of our relationships with those who were involved were not positive....A lot of organizations viewed the school district as a risk[y partner]—as controlling, as pulling rank and vetoing decisions. There were very tense conversations.*
>
> —School District Administrator

> *Our past relationship with the school district was one of intolerance and hate. We are fairly experienced at collaboration but it's a tricky relationship with the schools. The schools felt attacked by us because we published the negative outcomes in the schools [in an evaluation of a prior initiative].*
>
> —Fiscal Agency Staff

As it happens, of the three cities with problematic relationships with school districts, all had chosen to adapt the Beacons model. This pattern could have occurred for a variety of reasons. It could be a chance outcome. It could be that the cities' past tensions with school districts attracted them to the Beacons model. Or, it could be that something about the Beacons model itself affects the relationships.

It is impossible to determine the degree to which each reason contributed to the experiences we observed. Cities with tense prior relationships may have chosen the Beacons because it is one model in which the school district does not have to be a key player. While people involved in the Beacons readily prefer the support and engagement of the schools and recognize that such support strengthens program implementation, they remain prepared to enter schools even when strong support is not available. The assumption is that successful implementation will create productive school/CBO relationships. Previous tensions between the CBOs and the school districts also could have been aggravated by the model's reliance on CBOs to manage programs at the schools.

Whatever the reasons for the tensions, all three cities found effective solutions to their problems and moved forward. They therefore provide good examples of adaptations that permit the models to adjust to local conditions. Planning team members engaged in a series of extensive—and ultimately successful—negotiations with school districts and CBOs. In one city, the school board expressed strong concern that the ESS Adaptation would bring health clinics that might provide reproductive health services (including birth control) into the schools. The school board's concern threatened the initiative. The planning team assured the board that no health clinics would be started in the Beacon Centers, thereby allowing the initiative to move forward.

In a second city, the school district expressed concern that the CBOs chosen as lead agencies might not work cooperatively with and be accountable to the schools. This concern led to an agreement that the school district would have veto power over any CBO that applied to become a Beacon Center lead agency.

In the third city, negotiations centered around who would be the lead agency for the Beacon Centers. The

Department of Community Education, which is part of the school district, initially wanted to help manage the effort, believing that it was already providing after-school youth development services. The CBOs involved in the effort, however, indicated that they believed that what Community Education does differs from the work of a Beacon Center, which has an explicit youth development focus that Community Education does not.[12] One proposal suggested by the planning team that would have given Community Education a major role in the management of the Beacons Adaptation was that everyone would plan and manage the initiative together:

> *The theory of the group, not mine, was that, "sure, this money is supposed to go to community-based organizations, but we ought to just put the money in there and have everybody work equally and everyone plan and manage this together."*
> —Planning Team Member from CBO

This plan, however, was not agreeable to a key member of the planning team, who referred the group to the original New York model. Ultimately, the group found an acceptable compromise and agreed that the overall initiative would be managed by a community based-organization. The group also decided that, at the school level, three Beacon Centers would be managed by community-based organizations, and two others would be funded and managed primarily by Community Education. The grant guidelines prevented substantial Wallace-Readers' Digest Funds from going to the two Community Education schools, although both were included in all local Beacons activities: retreats, training and shared planning sessions. The compromise ensured that the school district—in the form of Community Education—was an active partner in the initiative.

Each negotiation led to modifications in the Beacons model. One city allows the school district to have veto power over proposed CBOs—the least significant change since it does not alter the implementation of the program once a CBO is selected. The modification in the second city limits the kinds of health services that can be provided in the schools. The modification involving Community Education potentially has the most far-reaching consequences because it lays the groundwork for a change in how Community Education approaches its work. One stakeholder suggested that Community Education might benefit from what he saw as the holistic approach the Beacons model takes to youth and communities. Instead of providing discrete programs as it had traditionally done, this person perceived that Community Education schools might move toward a menu of interrelated programs in the after-school and evening hours. Other stakeholders suggested that the move could potentially enhance Community Education's youth development focus. Should either of those two things happen, Community Education could be in a position to expand Beacons programming throughout the school system.

In contrast to the Beacons Adaptations, none of the cities engaged in adapting Bridges to Success reported significant tensions between CBOs and school districts. Disentangling the reasons why the relationships in the Bridges sites tended to be good from the beginning is also difficult. As in the Beacons, both local context and model characteristics may be involved. In two of the three Bridges to Success sites that were visited, a strong culture of collaboration existed between schools and CBOs prior to the ESS Adaptation. In the third, a strong collaboration existed between the United Way and the school district, thus laying the groundwork for the Bridges to Success collaboration. In addition, the Bridges to Success model emphasizes that management and decision-making will include the schools from the beginning, thus allaying possible fears that schools might have about letting CBOs into the schools.

The Importance of Previous Relationships and Experiences

An early description of after-school initiatives reported that programs get off the ground more quickly if they are built on pre-existing collaborations (Melaville, 1998). In the ESS Initiative, national intermediaries and the Funds assumed that a city with a history of collaboration would provide a more conducive environment for implementing the ESS Adaptation than would a city without such a history. To examine that assumption it is necessary to look at how previous collaborative efforts influenced the adaptation effort. Were the adaptations implemented more quickly or effectively as a result of previous collaborations? Unfortunately, examining this issue is difficult because having a collaborative environment was a key criteria (along with the commitment and capacity to carry out the adaptation) for selecting sites; therefore, there is relatively little variation among the sites with respect to the presence or absence of a history of local collaborations.

Only two sites, Denver and Atlanta, did not have pre-existing collaborations. When we visited, Atlanta was in the early planning stages, making it difficult to comment on a relationship that was very new.[11] Denver, however, did have particularly difficult planning and early implementation periods. The collaboration's experiences are interesting because they are a testament both to how difficult forming collaborations can be *and* to how effectively such problems can be solved. There was considerable tension over roles and responsibilities, suggesting that the assumption made by the initiative's designers may be correct. On the other hand, collaborators in Denver were aware of the difficulties of forging their partnership and worked to hammer out roles and responsibilities that were more functional. By the end of the first full year of implementation, the progress in Denver was similar in many regards to that of other sites. Thus, the lack of a pre-existing collaboration may be only a temporary impediment, as long as collaborative members are aware of the difficulties and take steps to address them. The text box provides details about the challenges facing Denver and the solutions found by the stakeholders.

Despite the fact that little variation existed among the sites with respect to the presence or absence of previous collaborations, variation did exist in how the previous collaborations were related to the collaboration created for the ESS Adaptation. In some cases, the key personnel involved in both the previous and the ESS collaborations are almost identical. Two of the Bridges to Success cities we visited—Jacksonville and Missoula—used the initiative to substantially enhance programs that were already in place. In Missoula, Bridges to Success expanded a pre-existing after-school project from one to five schools. In Jacksonville, Bridges to Success added youth development and after-school activities to an already extensive school/community collaboration that provides social services within the schools. In both cities, pre-existing collaboration eased the planning and transition to implementation.

In other cities, overlap existed among personnel in the previous and current ESS collaboration, which also involved additional types of institutions. Thus, in Minneapolis, a previous relationship existed among city agencies and schools in the form of Minneapolis Redesign, an initiative intended to provide social services within schools. The collaborative board behind Minneapolis Redesign is the Youth Coordinating

Forging Partnerships in Denver

Denver presents a good example of the challenges inherent in forging a collaborative effort where none had existed previously, or where those that had existed proved unsuccessful. It also presents a good example of how the challenges can be overcome.

Denver had difficulties forging a partnership with the school system, as did the other Beacon sites. Denver's difficulties were compounded, however, because the foundations that took the lead, the Rose Community Foundation (the fiscal agent) and the Piton Foundation (the local intermediary), had confusing roles for the first year of the initiative. Technically, the Rose Community Foundation provided overall management, but the Piton Foundation had been key in bringing the initiative to Denver, and so sometimes appeared to take on management responsibilities. Staff at the Beacon Centers themselves were unsure what the two foundations' roles were and to whom they were ultimately accountable.

Complicating matters were the relationships with the lead agencies, which were occasionally not sure what their responsibilities were vis-a-vis the collaboration.

The tensions and hard feelings became obvious to the partners, and much time was spent in the second half of the first year addressing them. If the relationships within the city are seen as a web, there were three loci at which work needed to be done. First, the foundations, each of which had a very strong commitment to the initiative, hammered out their respective roles and responsibilities. The fiscal agent agreed to limit its work to management and fiscal oversight, and the intermediary became more focused on technical assistance. Second, the school district, having received a significant concession in being able to veto potential lead agencies, became more supportive. With the help of a key school district member, the foundations mediated the relationships between the schools and CBOs. Third, Beacon Center directors were concerned both about whether they could realistically meet the goals made for the initiative and what their relationships should be to the two founda-tions. Thus, they met with key oversight partners to discuss their concerns. In response, local initiative leaders agreed that the initial goals had been set too high, and more realistic goals were set. The founda-tions also clarified for the sites what sites could expect from them.

The work done among the partners to improve their relationships and clarify their roles proved successful. By the end of the first year of implementation the collaborative's relationships were much improved.

Board (YCB), elected officials from the major public governing bodies that meet to discuss youth services in Minneapolis and to recommend specific allocations of funds across public agencies.

Similarly, in Savannah, the Youth Futures Authority (YFA) has a long history of collaboration with youth-serving organizations, but its recent history with the school district is limited. Finally, in Central Falls, while the United Way and the school district had been in partnership with early childhood CBOs for another initiative, the Child Opportunity Zone, the Bridges to Success initiative required that the school district and the United Way forge partnerships with a new set of CBOs—those serving older children and youth.

In all these cases, bringing in major new partners, whether schools or CBOs, proved challenging. CBOs in Minneapolis were actively courted and reassured that their participation in the Beacon initiative was important. While they could not be assured that their participation was permanent, key stakeholders emphasized that they wanted to continue to involve the CBOs, who were leery of participating. Addressing the CBOs' concerns went a long way toward improving the perceptions the CBOs had of the school district.

Thus, pre-existing collaborations appear to have eased the initial start-up phase of the project. Cities with a history of collaboration moved more quickly and had fewer tensions about how to structure the collaboration than did the one city with limited prior history. In addition, in the two cities in which the previous collaboration became the ESS collaboration, the transition to ESS was very smooth. Pre-existing collaborations did not, however, eliminate challenges. In cities in which new stakeholders—such as CBOs—were added to a pre-existing collaboration to create the ESS collaboration, negotiations and compromises were still necessary to forge effective relationships.

We cannot, however, conclude that the presence or type of pre-existing collaborations had any long-term effects on the initiative. The one site, Denver, that did not start off with a pre-existing collaboration, faced great tension, but successfully addressed its challenges. Similarly, sites that faced the need to negotiate with new partners were often able to do so effectively. By the time implementation began, stakeholders in all cities expressed optimism that their collaborations would prove fruitful. The tensions during planning, therefore, should be recognized for what they are: developmental difficulties that face collaboratives in their early periods. While we would not expect every community to successfully navigate the challenges, the ESS experience is a promising example of how to overcome even the most difficult ones.

Technical Assistance in Forging Collaborations

The national intermediaries for three of the models—Community Schools, Beacons and Bridges to Success—were charged with providing technical assistance to the sites throughout planning. Cities noted two specific areas in which technical assistance proved extremely useful in creating their collaborations: clarifying decision-making and promoting the development of positive relationships among partners.

A key task of the intermediaries was to come into a city at the request of one of the stakeholders, assess the operations of the collaboration, examine its decisions and make recommendations about how to address key challenges. In a very real sense, intermediary staff acted as management consultants. Although they clarified grant requirements when necessary, their extensive experience in school-community collaborations allowed them to make suggestions for mediating tensions that arose in allocating resources and responsibilities among the partners. For example, when Minneapolis partners did not agree on the role of Community Education, the intermediary helped find a compromise that met the grant requirements and also provided Community Education with a satisfactory role in the initiative. Intermediary staff were also crucial to the success of early negotiations with the school system in Denver. Their status as outsiders permitted them to become a neutral sounding board for the complaints of all parties. Their expertise in mediating political conflicts with schools allowed them to find a solution that satisfied all the parties.

Another very important aspect of the technical assistance provided by the national intermediaries, especially in complexly structured Beacons and Bridges to Success sites, was the opportunity the intermediaries gave cities in the planning stage to visit other cities with active initiatives and go to cross-site conferences. Making visits to original model sites proved to be a particularly useful way to illustrate the potential of the ESS Adaptations and generate enthusiasm for the local

initiatives. Members of the planning and implementation teams from the cities made visits to the original models' sites at two different points in time. First, the planning team members in the Beacon adaptation cities mentioned that they had been to New York to see New York Beacon Centers several years prior to implementation. For those cities, the New York Centers spurred key planning team members to gather collaborators to think about applying for the planning grant. More commonly, however, cities made visits near the end of planning or the beginning of implementation.

The visits helped some participants clarify their thoughts about the scope and goals of the initiatives, which are extensive for every model. In particular, several people mentioned that they had not quite understood that the initiative hoped to strengthen local communities' voices in determining the services available to both adults and youth:

> *It took me until September, when we went to the Fund for the City of New York, that I understood the community-based part of it, this wasn't just for youth, there needed to be community organizing going on with it...Having people talk about the history, give the context, really helped me a lot. It helped me refine, clarify and collect my thoughts about youth development in a way that I hadn't done before.*
>
> —CBO Staff

The visits also sparked enthusiasm and support in previously reluctant participants. Principals, in particular, reported that going to see model sites showed them what was possible in the ESS Adaptation:

> *We visited New York in September, and it helped me to develop a mind set that I think will be necessary into the next century. Schools, when we say we need help from community agencies and parents, we don't just educate children 5 days/week, 6 hours/day, 175 days/year. By keeping our schools open we back that up so that we educate further. It builds community relationships, can build some community spirit. Again, after the normal school hours and on weekends—the old mind set was you close the school up, and it's safe and secure. You don't have to worry about problems. That was the mind set that I developed. And by going to New York, I developed a new mind set.*
>
> —Principal

The timing of such visits, however, is important. Turnover in the initiatives, particularly among program staff and principals, can be high. In Minneapolis, three of the principals in the five schools selected to host the Beacon Centers were reassigned between planning and implementation. As a result, had the Minneapolis group visited New York during the planning period, enthusiasm would have been generated among principals who were not involved in implementation. It happened that the group went to New York in September, just before implementation began in October; thus the principals' enthusiasm was fresh just as implementation got under way.

Visits to the original model sites, however, were just one way to generate support, understanding and enthusiasm. According to some staff, particularly those involved in the Bridges to Success Adaptation, conferences that brought together all the programs provided similar benefits:

> *We got the youth development coordinators to go and a principal. He's now like the poster child [for the program], he's very enthusiastic. The conference really did a lot for the youth development coordinators. They got to thinking more about what we were trying to do...They got to see that we aren't just doing things to do them. Now [one of the coordinators] is starting to think about getting community volunteers.*
>
> —Oversight Committee Member

Since cross-site conferences are scheduled on a yearly basis, they have the potential to provide an orientation to the goals and scope of the initiative for stakeholders —new principals, new coordinators and new agency partners—who did not make earlier visits. This is

important, since turnover is proving to be a concern: the problem with the collaborative model of community/school after-school programs is that there are multiple key people whose leaving may deeply affect implementation. Ongoing conferences may ameliorate the problem, but they may also prove challenging, since the intermediaries will probably need to balance the need to provide orientations to new staff with the need to provide technical assistance that is responsive to the developmental stage of the overall initiative.

Although the visits were perhaps most useful in transmitting the vision of the initiative to a range of stakeholders (which we address in the next chapter), they were also useful in helping people within the cities to get to know one another better. Visits put principals in close contact not only with program coordinators at their schools, but also with local funders and executive staff from the CBOs. Such visits helped stakeholders develop a shared identity:

> *The New York trip (to see Beacon Centers) bonded everyone together; [it's the] same thing with kids, take them on an overnight and they bond. We had to figure out how to get around New York on the subways!*
>
> —Fiscal Agency Staff

Summary

Community initiatives, whether comprehensive or focused (like the ESS Initiative) are designed to be sensitive to local conditions. Partnerships and collaborative structures that work in one community are unlikely to work in quite the same way in another. ESS is no exception, and the process of adapting the model to fit the specific cities began in the formation of the collaborations that did the planning. Participants had several motivations for getting involved, but no one motivation appeared to determine whether involvement continued into implementation.

Surprisingly, the existence of a previous collaboration, which is often assumed to be an indication of future collaborative success, did not seem to matter after the first year or so of the initiative, although we must qualify that conclusion by noting that the variation among the sites was limited. Both cities with pre-existing collaborations and the two cities without one had to make significant efforts to involve key partners and clarify roles. In cities that had pre-existing collaborations, the addition of major new partners or a change in the focus of the collaboration often resulted in the need to re-examine roles and responsibilities. The one city without a pre-existing collaboration was able to assemble an effective one after identifying areas in which relationships were strained or the roles of partners unclear.

One factor that stakeholders reported very useful to forging effective collaborations was the assistance of the national intermediaries in mediating early disputes. The experience that intermediary staff brought with them from other community/school collaborations helped find compromises and solutions to problems that may not have occurred to the ESS partners.

VII. The Tasks of Planning

The planning period was primarily a period of relationship building as the partners completed three discrete planning tasks crucial to program implementation. First, the planning teams conducted needs assessments and community mapping to help them delineate overall goals and the scope of the local initiative. Second, specific schools were selected for program implementation. Third, the initiative's financing was identified. Although the Wallace-Readers' Digest Funds provided much of the funding for the initiative, each city was expected to provide matching funds. This chapter describes the strategies that the cities used as they carried out the tasks, and highlights those that appeared particularly effective.

Needs Assessments and Community Mapping

Identifying local needs and resources is a fundamental task of creating community initiatives that are sensitive to local conditions. Without adequate knowledge of the local environment, it is difficult to know what steps should be taken to improve the lives of youth and their families. But another important reason to do a needs assessment is that it can be a powerful tool for creating a shared vision (Kotloff et al., 1995).

Each ESS city was required to carry out a needs assessment as part of the planning process, but how it did so was left to the city. There was therefore great variation in how localities completed the task. Although the needs assessments were an integral part of the planning phase, their utility as planning tools to guide program development appears to have been limited in five of the communities. Typically, the lists of needs or desires produced by the assessments were very broad, and little was done to prioritize them. The relationship between the needs assessments and program planning and implementation was generally weak, especially in cities with multiple schools involved in the initiative—Denver, Minneapolis, Jacksonville, Savannah, Central Falls and Missoula. That those cities were less successful in linking findings of the needs assessments to specific program implementation is not surprising, since each ESS center serves a different community, with different resources and somewhat different needs. The needs assessments were more likely to be related to program planning when the assessment concerned only one community. Despite their limited usefulness in program planning,

the needs assessments were fundamental to developing a shared vision and community support for the work in many cities.

In four cities, principals observed that focus groups and surveys conducted at the schools were important in establishing the programs' legitimacy. Since we did not ask the principals about the needs assessment, principals who brought it up did so in the context of assessing their experiences of the initiative:

> *[The coordinator has] done really well as far as making sure that the whole community is involved—we did a survey of types of programs that community people wanted to see. It was a community-driven program.*
>
> —Principal

> *I also wanted to make sure that the kids had a say in what they wanted to do. There were focus groups. I remember [the youth coordinator] doing that, and there were questions about whether the kids would be interested in a homework club—we have a homework club through SCOPE, it goes four afternoons/week. The kids love it, they have no place at home to study/nobody to help them.*
>
> —Principal

As we saw in earlier chapters, principal support is important in getting an Extended-Service School program off the ground. Thus, needs assessments—especially those that include youth in focus groups, surveys, or even in mapping—may be an important tool in creating and sustaining the principal's support by building consensus among the principal's key constituents—parents and youth.

School Selection

In most cities that begin after-school initiatives, a small number of schools are chosen to pilot the programs before expanding them. Factors underlying the decision to begin with a limited number of schools include limited funding that can sustain programs only in a few schools. In addition, leaders of local after-school efforts hope that the programs prove effective and that political goodwill can be generated to increase funding for additional school programs.

In two cities, the needs assessments were conducted by youth and/or community residents. The strategies used were unusual, and we summarize them below:

Youth Mapping in Denver
Staff from the Piton Foundation, a local organization that has taken a key leadership role in the Denver Beacons Initiative, coordinated a youth mapping effort. Training in youth mapping was provided by the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research of the Academy for Educational Development, and eight youth spent two weeks conducting surveys within the neighborhoods where Beacon Centers were to be located. The youth mapping created significant enthusiasm and receptiveness for youth leadership and involvement. In addition, specific program categories, such as technology, were added based on the findings. The Denver Beacon Centers have continued to emphasize youth involvement: youth assist in activity implementation and office management, and participate in structured leadership groups.

Focus groups in Long Beach
Staff from California State University, Long Beach, conducted focus groups with children and school staff separately as well as a series with parents, teachers and agencies together. They also trained community residents to facilitate focus groups with parents from the community. The process required both an initial training and a follow-up training to ensure that the facilitators did not impose their own opinions on the group. After transcribing all the focus groups' proceedings, planners identified eight key areas of action for the Stevenson-YMCA Community School: safety, sports, increasing interaction between teachers and families, family learning activities, child academic and career development, parent career development, fine arts and leisure, and a parent center. The planners then worked to design activities in each area.

Also, sometimes political goodwill must be generated to get an initiative off the ground, and collaborative partners must identify commodities that can be exchanged to ensure support from other partners that have critical resources. Locating an after-school program in a specific school occasionally becomes one of the concessions made for key partners.

For all these reasons, school selection is a crucial step in planning after-school initiatives. The research examined the criteria used by the ESS planning teams in selecting schools. In future work, it will examine what influence, if any, the decisions had on implementation, including the sustainability and expansion of the initiative. Because this report is based on data only

through the first year of implementation, it is not possible to fully answer questions about the relationship between school selection criteria and outcomes. Some outcomes—including the building of political goodwill toward continued funding—are not achievable within such a short time-frame, and thus cannot be studied. It is possible, however, to identify the criteria cities used and their reasons for doing so.

Schools in Low-Income Communities

The mission of the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds is to "foster fundamental improvement in the quality of educational and career development opportunities for all school-age youth, and to increase access to these improved services for young people in low-income communities." As a result, all the elementary and middle schools selected in the ESS communities serve high proportions of low-income youth.[14] Twenty-five percent of the schools reported that between 42 and 70 percent of their students are eligible for the federal free and reduced school lunch program. In the other 75 percent of the schools, more than 70 percent of all students are eligible.

Principal Support

In a very small number of schools among the models, principals were key in advocating for the schools' inclusion in the extended-service school effort. In both the Community School cities, the initiative built on a previous university/school case-management collaboration. In the early 1990s, the Wallace-Readers' Digest Funds had funded an interprofessional development project for teachers and social workers. That initiative originally funded a full-time social worker responsible for providing services and supervising social work students in a public school setting. University personnel in both cities indicated that the schools' principals had been eager to collaborate with the university and willing to provide school resources. Although that initiative ultimately ended, the Funds, working with Fordham University and the Children's Aid Society, decided that the universities involved provided a promising pool of applicants for the Community Schools' Adaptation because both initiatives included greater school/community integration. The principals reported that the earlier collaborations had provided important benefits that they hoped to expand through the ESS initiative.

Similarly, in two Beacons cities—Minneapolis and Denver—strong long-time principals at two schools lobbied hard to be included in the Beacon Adaptation grant. Like the principals in the Community School cities, both perceived that the initiative could provide important benefits to youth and families—benefits that could not easily be provided in the context of the academic day. In one case, a principal contributed a substantial sum from his school budget to bring the initiative in.

Cases in which principals drove their school's selection were rare—it happened in only 4 of the 27 schools in the intensive research study. More commonly, though principals' support was perceived to be important, they did not campaign for inclusion. A principal's support of an extended-service school is important in determining the course of implementation: principals may control school space, they may be able to influence teachers' perceptions of an extended-service school, and they may provide or withhold school resources. Therefore, planning team members in the majority of cities indicated in interviews that a principal's enthusiasm and support had been an important criteria for selecting schools. We only heard of one case in which a school was selected after the principal demurred.

Principal turnover was relatively high in the schools, and thus their support might be short-lived. Elementary school principals were promoted to middle school, middle school principals promoted to high schools, principals in low-achieving schools were replaced by principals from higher-achieving schools. In our sample of nine cities, approximately 25 percent of the principals had been replaced between the planning and implementation period. The principal in Denver who had been so instrumental in getting a Beacon placed in her school was promoted after the planning period, and the new principal needed to be introduced to the initiative. In Minneapolis, a supportive principal was transferred to another school.

The high turnover rates among principals in the intensive study cities was also reflected in the organizational survey. Thirty percent of the respondents indicated that the principal had been in place less than one year. Furthermore, 66 percent of the schools reported that they had two or more principals in the prior five years.

Principal turnover in urban schools is common. Urban schools that serve low-income students—those targeted by the ESS Initiative—often have high proportions of low-achieving students. School teachers and administrators are increasingly held accountable for student performance, so one method by which school districts attempt to raise student academic performance is to change school leadership.

Because turnover among principals is so high, using principals' support as a criteria in school selection may ease early implementation, but probably will not determine the overall course of an after-school program. New principals may be more or less supportive than outgoing principals. New principals will almost certainly require orientation to the scope and goals of the after-school programs. Program staff will also need to meet with principals to discuss ways in which they can work together. In addition, principals' attention is usually diverted for a year or so as they get to know the school's faculty and students, and establish their leadership.

School Level

Many cities decided that it was important to include middle schools in their initiative. The middle school years have been long been identified as a critical period for youth. Parental supervision usually diminishes. Youth become increasingly autonomous in choosing activities. Risk behaviors rise dramatically, in part because there is so little adult supervision, especially in the hours immediately after school (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992). At the same time, the menu of after-school activities common in high schools—music, the arts, leadership groups, paid jobs and volunteer activities—have largely become unavailable to middle school youth.

More pragmatically, one planning team member noted that middle schools are a good choice if the initiative hopes to attract youth from middle, high *and* elementary schools: "elementary kids like middle school and it's not too far back for high school youth."

For all these reasons, of the 45 schools involved in the ESS Initiative for which we have information, 50 percent are middle schools, including one that serves K-8th grade. An additional 40 percent of the selected schools are elementary schools. In Missoula, where three elementary schools that feed C.S. Porter Middle School—a school with a project on which the local Bridges to Success initiative was modeled—were chosen, a planning team member said they were selected so "we could get kids earlier and get them used to these types (e.g., youth development) of activities." The remaining 10 percent are high schools.

School Location

Four of the six cities with multiple schools in their initiatives chose a strategy governing center location. Two of the cities—Denver and Minneapolis—decided to locate services in areas of the city that had high need as defined by academic achievement and the poverty rates of the students' families. The other two cities—Jacksonville and Savannah—decided to spread their efforts across their cities.

All Jacksonville's school districts were invited to apply for Bridges to Success funding. By spreading centers across the city, the city hoped to generate broad political goodwill to encourage future funding. The planning team in Savannah, which was led by the Youth Futures Authority (YFA), made a similar decision to spread the Beacon Centers across the city. YFA, a city-wide collaboration to improve youth services, had long focused its attention on Area C, a high-poverty neighborhood near downtown, and had picked up some resentment within the city that so many resources were being devoted to that area. To allay the resentment and any possible effects it might have on YFA's ability to be a strong leader in youth programs and collaborations, the ESS planning team chose areas in east, west and central Savannah.

It is too early to know whether such strategic placement of extended-service schools in a community will increase the initiatives' political capital. This is a question that will be followed as we look at how the cities plan future funding.

Financing the Programs

Acquiring the necessary resources—financial and nonfinancial—to implement an ESS program is a challenging assignment even with the current emphasis at the federal, state and local levels on after-school programming for youth. Therefore, one of the major planning tasks was determining the resources needed to get the program off the ground and putting these resources together. Potentially, many streams of funding can support the programs: existing resources can be

redirected, such as reassigning school personnel and/or CBO personnel to staff the program or particular activities; federal, state and local funds can be used or redirected; business and philanthropies can provide money; and volunteers can help support the program. However, many of these strategies take time to develop. Relationships with business and political leaders need to be fostered. Public support needs to be garnered. Proposals need to be written. In this section we discuss the programs' budgets, and how they assembled the resources they needed to get started. The Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds grant was a part of the strategy, but only a part.

It is important to know total program cost because it represents the full value of the resources that must be assembled. All ESS budgets, however, understate the full cost of the program because they do not reflect the full range of community resources that support the effort. The most common and largest in-kind resources provided, but mostly omitted from the budgets, are the office and program space donated by the schools. In the next report, we will systematically investigate the full set of resources used in the programs, value them and calculate the total annual cost per enrolled youth. To give practitioners and funders a sense of what is entailed in supporting early implementation, however, this report examines what the programs expected their out-of-pocket costs to be by reviewing early budgets and how they leveraged other resources.

Budgets

At a minimum, all programs had to find or finance a standard list of resources to make the after-school program operational: salaries for staff including a project director and school coordinator; activity costs (which may include activity leaders' time, equipment, and custodial services and supplies); some office expenses such as space and equipment; and other costs. For some programs, transportation is a necessity, for others it is optional. Some provide snacks for the participants. Other expenditures include consultant time for executive administrative assistance, recruitment of new staff, public relations and development work. Before the programs began, the planning team defined the level of resources they needed and how they would cover their budgets, both by new monies and redirected or donated funds. They submitted to the Fund three-year budgets at the end of the planning period.

Estimated annual per-program start-up budgets varied across and within models. These estimates are *not* budgets for operating a mature program because they include expenses associated with start-up, such as extra hiring costs, executive oversight time and technical assistance. They are, however, rough estimates of what the cities believed they would spend getting the programs on the ground. On average, Beacon programs budgeted between $250,000 and $300,000 per school per year. Budgets for Community School programs ranged from $150,000 to $300,000 per school annually. Bridges to Success programs budgeted an average of $80,000 to $90,000 per school annually. Within-model per-school budgets across cities, however, were also significant and varied as much as 100 percent.

The magnitude of the budgets reflects both differences in the intended intensity and size of the programs. From Chapter IV, we know that the size of the programs differed at the end of the first year. The programs' relative sizes can help put the budgets into perspective. One should not, however, calculate a per-student annual cost from these numbers because the budgets include start-up costs and not all the students participated for the full year. With these caveats in mind, we found that Beacons had enrolled many more students at the end of the first year than did the other models—an average of approximately 275 students per school. The Bridges programs had the next largest average annual enrollments of approximately 135 students, followed by Community Schools at 120 students. The WEPIC programs are not yet fully implemented, thus we do not know how many students they will serve. While we will investigate the per-student cost of the various programs for our next report, it is likely that the Community Schools model budgets the most per student. The relative position of the other models is less clear.

Assembling Resources

The sources from which the cities assembled the needed resources differed widely, suggesting that no one size fits all. Each strategy was related to the city's specific context and past experiences. If the ESS program grew out of a previously existing after-school program, the old funders generally continued their support. If the school had a family or parent center, some of these resources were often tapped.

If there were organizations that conducted satellite youth programs, such as libraries or museums, these resources could often be brought in to the ESS programs.

Established organizations could also apply for grants for new programs to be implemented by the ESS programs.

Programs of a similar size with similar resources can vary greatly in how their funding package is assembled. In general, programs assemble the needed resources through a combination of commitments from community organizations, in-kind donations by citizens and businesses, the use of the school building as the site of program activities and grants from private (and in a few instances, corporate) foundations. Subsidized or donated time from community leaders, school district personnel and school principals is also essential for the planning and implementation of programs as well as their continued existence.

Costs covered with redirected funds or in-kind donations exceed the expenses paid for by cash contributions by one or two hundred percent. However, the cash funds raised from foundations, government agencies, the United Way and youth-funding groups are often the catalyst for leveraging these other resources. The Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds grant was the real spark for most of the ESS cities (though quite a few had either been thinking about doing something like ESS or had an after-school program already in place). Programs used their funds grants to significantly leverage other support.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the programs first built a partnership of funders that mirrored the implementation partnerships, but then reached out to other funders. For the Bridges to Success programs, the United Way, the sponsor of that program model, is a substantial funder through direct grants, but the school district also provides redirected funds. The WEPIC programs receive major support, mainly personnel not accounted for in the budgets, from the university that sponsors them. This, coupled with redirected funding from the school district, are the main sources of support for WEPIC programs. The Community Schools have two major funders, the Funds and the school district. Beacons programs have been the most successful in expanding their major funding base to include local agencies, the federal government, local government and other foundations.

Because leveraging noncash resources is so important, we present an example of how cash funds leveraged many more resources.

How Much Cash Is Needed to Get Started in a School?

As discussed above, only some of the resources needed to run an ESS program are covered by cash payments. However, in practice, some unrestricted funds are necessary to start a program. "How much?" ask many people interested in starting these types of program. For the most part, the more monetary resources one has the richer or bigger the program can be, but what is the reasonable lower-bound estimate? Generally, programs used their monetary resources to fund core staff's time, to subsidize or fully pay for some youth activities, and to cover some administrative costs.

A review of the expenditures of a sample of 11 ESS cities shows that a school's program can be started on less than $30,000 cash annually, provided it can leverage other resources and the use of a school building. For example, one ESS city operated in three schools with the cash budget shown in Table 7.1. The program director managed the program at one of the three schools and the school coordinator covered the two other schools. Thus, this city averaged $30,000 per school. However, as we discussed in Chapter V, the quality of the program (or the mental health of the coordinator) is compromised with a half-time school coordinator. All the programs with half-time school coordinators are trying to find funds to increase the school coordinators' time.

Table 7.1
A Minimal Cash Budget in ESS City with *Three* Schools

Salary and Fringe Benefits:	
Program Director (20 hrs/wk)	$20,000
One School Coordinator (40 hrs/wk)	$30,000
Resources for youth activities	$25,000
Office	$15,000
Cash Total	**$90,000** for 3 schools

Recognizing that they needed more staff, initiative leaders in the city used the initial cash grants to leverage redirected funds. They tripled the budget and expanded program capacity, which included additional coordination staff for each school. Table 7.2 shows the more complete budget. The redirected funds (in bold) provided additional staff support, office equipment and supplies, staff development and administrative support.

In two schools, the school coordinator's time was complemented by two Americorps workers sponsored by a CBO. At another school, a part-time social worker in the program was paid for by the state. At another school, a school resource person worked part time and was paid for by the city's Police Department. Additional overall supervision was provided by the director of the previous after-school program, yet this individual's salary was paid for by a community nonprofit. Lastly, in schools that had a Family Resource Center (FRC), staff members (funded by another local CBO) donated some time to help organize parent and youth activities.

Much of the youth activity was paid for through a combination of cash and redirected funds. It is typical in this city for a youth-serving organization to donate the activity leader's time (redirected funds) to the program, while the ESS program supplies the necessary equipment and supplies, using its cash funds. For example, the local museum sends its staff to the school building to run activities without charging the program.

Many other CBOs ran activities in a similar manner. The school district paid teachers to run the program's after-school activities. The university partner in the collaborative paid for all the expenses associated with the program's community service programming—recruiting leaders, identifying projects, transporting the participants to the schools, etc. The space in which activities took place was provided by the school district, but this cost was an "off-budget" item and does not appear in the full cash and redirected funds financial statement, illustrating how even the total budget underestimates the total resource cost of the program.

Table 7.2
Expanded Budget with Redirected Funds

Salaries and Fringes:		
Program director		$ 20,000
One school coordinator		30,000
Additional school staff		***68,000***
	Subtotal	$118,000
Youth Activities:		
Monetary resources for youth activities		$ 25,000
Service-learning training for sites (from a university)		***19,000***
Museum-sponsored activities (staff and equipment)		***50,000***
CBO-sponsored activities		***25,000***
Teacher-led activities		***15,000***
	Subtotal	$134,000
Administrative Expenses:		
Administrative time of sponsoring agency and community partners		***$ 13,000***
Cash expenses		15,000
Agency-donated office space for project director		***0***
Use of office equipment and supplies		***5,000***
	Subtotal	$ 30,000
	Cash, plus redirected total	$285,000

Many administrative costs were absorbed by the sponsoring agency. It provided office space for the program director (no value placed on this contribution), shared its copy machine and other equipment, and provided the program director with supplies and postage. The executive director of the fiscal agency gave several hours a week to sit on the management board, advise the director, and assist in coalition-building in the community. This administrator also often assists in obtaining additional funding or resources for the program. Yet, the administrator's full salary continued to be paid by the fiscal agency. Additional administrative support came from a well-established community nonprofit that assisted in recruitment and screening of program staff, and processed the payroll for program staff. The value of the community nonprofit organization's contribution appears in the program's total budget even though checks were not written to the agency.

This example illustrates not only the creativity of the planning and management teams in locating the needed resources, but also the degree to which the budgets—both cash and in-kind—underestimate the true resource cost of these programs.

Summary of Planning Experience

This chapter has described how the city collaborations planned their local initiatives. The strategies taken to conduct needs assessments, select schools and plan financing were diverse, reflecting the different political and social service environments in which the ESS Initiative was planned. Multiple paths led to the same goal. Nevertheless, some general conclusions may be drawn from the information and we summarize them briefly.

The results of the needs assessments and community mapping undertaken by the cities were crucial to building support for the initiative—especially among school principals. The results' usefulness in guiding program planning was less clear, especially in communities that involved multiple schools.

School selection was guided by a combination of criteria ranging from the academic performance and economic backgrounds of the school's population, to geographic considerations, to principal support. Cities hoping to build broad-based political support for their local initiatives selected schools across cities. Some cities were able to avoid added transportation costs by selecting neighborhood schools, although cities that bus large proportions of students do not have that option. Principal support was almost always a key consideration. Since turnover among urban school principals is so high, however, a large number of schools had new principals by the time implementation began.

Assembling the resources to start and sustain the program was and still is a major challenge for the collaborative members. The cash grants the cities raised do not nearly cover the full cost of the program or even of the explicit program budget. Cities use these cash grants, however, to leverage large amounts of in-kind and redirected resources—from collaborative partners (the schools and local organizations) and others. These donated resources include such items as the use and maintenance of the school building, executive supervision and many providers' time.

VIII. Management and Governance

The transition from planning to implementation was a crucial period for the local initiatives. Decision-making authority over day-to-day management and responsibilities for sustaining the initiative had to be transferred from the planning committee to other groups: program directors and school coordinators who would be coordinating and directing the programs; city-wide oversight committees; and school-level governance councils. In almost all cities, specific decisions needed to be made about who would coordinate the local programs and what programs would be implemented.

This chapter describes the decision-making structures that were set-up and evolved at the school and city levels and their respective responsibilities. We distinguish day-to-day management of programs from governance. Day-to-day management includes scheduling and coordinating activities as well as overseeing operations. Governance includes making higher-level decisions such as the types of activity to be offered, staffing policies and plans to sustain the programs. For example, a decision to hire older youth to implement or staff activities as a way of developing their leadership and job skills would be a policy decision. Deciding which youth to hire would be a management decision. Similarly, setting annual budgets would be a governance decision, whereas administering the budget is part of day-to-day management. In addition to the distinction between management and governance at the school level, in the cities that have multiple schools involved in the initiative, governance often takes place at both the school and city levels. Such cities therefore had oversight committees responsible for decisions that cut across the school sites or concerned the initiative's future sustainability; they were often composed of planning team members. We begin our discussion with a description of front-line management—the school coordinators. Then we discuss the broader governance structures in which they were embedded. In particular, the chapter addresses the following questions:

- What was the role and the experience of the school coordinators?
- Among the three types of school-level governance observed—small team, lead agency and shared lead agency/school council—how did they differ and what were the advantages and disadvantages of each?

- What were the roles of the oversight committees in the cities that had them?

Unlike the program aspects discussed in earlier chapters, model type made a significant difference in governance from the beginning of implementation, since most of the models prescribed the governance structure. In addition, whether one school (as in Community Schools) or multiple schools were involved in the initiative significantly affected governance needs. Therefore, we discuss how the models mattered throughout the chapter.

School-level Management: the School Coordinator

Getting an after-school program off the ground in a school is a daunting and complex assignment. The responsibility for making it happen at a particular school fell most heavily on the school coordinator. Many of the school coordinators we talked to liken the job to being a ringmaster. The response to "What do you do?" was often "What don't I do!"

> *My role is to make connections... making it happen—getting building permits, finding free rooms for activities, developing alternative plans if they aren't free...tracking partici-pation...preparing rosters for the staff...gathering data...I have done programs too—chess club. I know that's not supposed to be my role, but I couldn't find anyone to do it. I did service club and...I tutor in the tutoring club. The logistics take most of my time.*
>
> —School Coordinator

At a minimum, coordinators had to provide activities —either themselves or by identifying and engaging activity providers; negotiate with the principals, teachers and custodians to obtain access to space for the activities; recruit children; and monitor activities. While these basic tasks are the necessary components of an after-school program, they are not sufficient to ensure that the program is well-run. Coordinators must also communicate with the principal, communicate with the teachers and custodians, and communicate with parents.

ESS school coordinators, however, were never envisioned as lone operators. They, instead, were seen as the front-line workers in a collaboration among several institutions. At the city level, many institutions were expected to be involved. But even at the school level, the school, a lead agency, other service providers, the community and sometimes a university were expected to be involved. While the involvement and resources of these multiple agencies can be advantageous to the program, it also makes the job of school coordinator more difficult as he/she has to deal with multiple masters—the principal, the lead agency and the community. This section describes who the coordinators were and how they were selected.

The Coordinators' Backgrounds

Given the complexity of the school coordinator's job, does it matter what expertise the coordinator has? Does it matter if the coordinator has an education background? A youth service background? Experience with the community? Experience with the school's lead agency? Experience with the school—the principal, teachers and parents? For example, teachers and principals may respect a teacher more than a non-teacher. Similarly, ex-teachers may understand the school culture more than nonteachers. On the other side, individuals with youth service backgrounds may be more respected by other CBO staff than teachers are.

Among the 27 schools we have examined in depth, we talked with 44 key coordinating staff members, namely school coordinators or assistant coordinators. Of these 44, two lived in the community, six had worked in the

The School Coordinator's Responsibilities

The responsibilities held by the school coordinators differed somewhat by city and school depending on whether funds existed for an assistant, but coordinators were generally responsible for:

- Recruiting Participants
- Recruiting and/or subcontracting with providers
- Supervising program staff
- Coordinating activity schedules
- Managing school/program relationships
- Obtaining space for activities
- Convening site councils
- Monitoring programs, including attendance
- Reporting to lead agencies
- Administering the program budget

In some schools they also provided activities themselves, either on an ongoing basis or as a substitute when a provider did not show up.

school in which they later became coordinators, and four had worked for the school's lead agency. Four had teaching degrees but had not taught at their ESS schools. Most of the coordinators had no immediate connection to the community, school or lead agency before being hired (though many had worked with children in the past in other youth-serving organizations or government-funded programs).

As the numbers indicate, programs did not look particularly for individuals with education degrees or teaching experience. In fact, most programs at first were interested in individuals with experience serving youth outside of school, especially in other after-school activities. Most of the sites made this choice so their ESS programs would not "feel like school," and the program would not be overly controlled by the school partner. Cost was another factor that pushed sites away from hiring teachers. In general, teachers are paid two or three times more than are other youth-serving workers. The ESS Adaptation cities could therefore hire more staff or allocate their resources to other needs by hiring less expensive, nonteaching staff.

The Effects of Coordinator's Backgrounds. In examining the early implementation experience, programs at the schools did not appear to be affected by the educational or youth programming experience of the coordinators. As we saw in Chapter V, however, forging positive relationships between the school-day staff and after-school staff was easier if the coordinator had experience in the school in which she/he became the coordinator. In a similar vein, the research asked if it mattered whether the coordinator had previous experience working with the specific CBO that acted as the lead agency. Although CBOs typically did not think they could spare staff, and thus tended to hire new staff to coordinate the after-school programs, in two sites the coordinators had worked for the CBO.

Their experiences show the advantages that previous experience may bring to the effort. When the lead agency was willing to provide additional resources, these individuals were able to draw on the assets of the CBO more effectively than were less knowledgeable coordinators:

> *[That program] works better 'cause [the coordinator] was a worker in [the lead agency] and they have a relationship with her. That is not true of the other coordinators...[She] had been an employee and she knows the people there and the ropes.*
>
> —Project Director

In addition to having strong relationships with CBO staff that helped the two coordinators as they implemented the programs at the schools, knowing what the CBO's resources were could benefit programs. One long-time employee of a youth-serving organization who became a coordinator was able to bring resources into the after-school program because she knew people in the CBO who were able to provide specific activities.

Although the relationships the coordinators bring with them to their program are important, it has become clear to all who are involved that turnover—in principals, school staff, coordinators, lead agency staff and youth workers—can easily wipe out any benefit. Relationship building, thus, must be seen as an ongoing process.

School-level Governance

Since the coordinators were not solo operators, but were in fact embedded in one of three governance structures, we looked next at those structures and how they eased or impeded implementation. The three strategies that cities used to govern programs at the school level were:

- Staff from the lead agency oversaw program activities at the school.
- Small teams of equal partners from a few institutions set policies and oversaw the programs; and
- Staff from lead agencies and school-level councils shared decision-making and oversight of programs.

Each governance strategy has potential advantages and disadvantages, and this section describes those structures and discusses their relative strengths and weaknesses. Table 8.1 delineates the planned strategies each city followed to oversee programs at the schools. As we describe, however, several cities had altered their strategies by the end of the first year of implementation.

Table 8.1
Planned Governance Structures at the Schools

Lead agency governance	Small-team governance	Shared governance between school-level councils and lead agency
Minneapolis	Atlanta	Central Falls
Missoula	Aurora	Denver
	Boston	Jacksonville
	Long Beach	Savannah

When Lead Agencies Oversee After-School Programs

The simplest governance strategy was to have coordinators plan and implement the after-school programs in conjunction with their direct supervisors at their CBO. Thus day-to-day management and governance were intertwined and embedded in one institution. Under those conditions, some coordinators were able to make budget allocations as well as manage them, to plan the program's array of activities as well as implement them. In sum, the coordinators and their lead agencies both managed and governed the programs. Two cities took this route at the beginning of the initiative. Having lead agencies staff the school sites and plan the programs minimized confusion over who was responsible for decisions.

The efficacy of using community-based organizations and their staff to oversee and coordinate the after-school programs depended in part on the organizational strengths and commitment of the CBO itself.

All else being equal, when strong youth development organizations with a strong commitment to the local initiatives served as lead CBOs, program governance and implementation were relatively smooth. As we observed in Chapter III, however, the commitments of the lead agencies to the school-based ESS programs varied for several reasons. Strong CBOs with weak commitments were not necessarily any more effective than—or even as effective as—smaller CBOs with less organizational capacity and greater commitment to the local initiative. School coordinators who were employed by strong CBOs with weak commitment sometimes reported that they did not get adequate support from their agencies. In contrast, a small CBO with limited organizational capacity could overcome its deficits if the agency's executive staff strongly supported the ESS program. Under those circumstances, executive staff could provide needed support and resources to program coordinators.

Small Team Approach to School-level Governance

In four cities, key planning partners governed activities at the schools. In those cities, the planning partners worked in relatively small groups to identify promising providers and decide how to allocate available funds. School principals were typically key members of the teams, as were university and CBO personnel. The teams were responsible for both day-to-day oversight of the programs and planning to sustain the initiative beyond the initial grant.

One characteristic of the small teams was the presence of pre-existing relationships among several team members. As a result, the partners had developed strong and effective working relationships. While the specific content of the ESS initiative may have differed from partners' prior efforts, their pre-existing relationships helped limit tensions prevalent in so many other cities. Another factor that may have reduced the tension in schools managed by small teams of people was that only a limited number of perspectives was brought to the table. It became easier to work out areas of disagreement if it was not necessary to navigate among many views. Although the partners seldom assigned specific roles and responsibilities, the ambiguity in their roles rarely caused significant tension since partners could sit down in groups of two or three and address their concerns together.

The small team structure is most likely to appear in the Community Schools and WEPIC models because they

tend to be in single-school cities. The demand and need for developing a larger oversight committee is not present when trouble-shooting and policy-setting can be easily done by two or three people. Although the leaders of the local initiatives with this kind of governance structure would like to have broader school-district support, the initiatives can progress without it, which is not possible in cities where three to five or more schools are involved.

The data on their accomplishments during the first year of implementation suggest that small team governance may have some potential drawbacks. Although the teams we observed were able to implement programs within the schools relatively quickly, sustaining the initiative over time appears more difficult. The time that members of the teams can contribute to issues of sustainability will likely be limited as the initiative unfolds. All members of the team have other major occupational responsibilities, such as teaching, writing or administrative duties, and thus their time and attention are split.

Another potential limitation of the small team structure is that although CBO executives on the teams may have extensive experience identifying and lobbying for public funds, principals and university professors are less likely to have such expertise. In this area, the small teams lack the capacity of the larger oversight committees in which school district administrators or government officials already have extensive experience in thinking about long-term funding for youth services.

Finally, in the four schools where we observed small team management, three had a dynamic principal who was crucial to the local initiative's leadership. While we saw other dynamic principals in other schools, not all principals were strong and forceful leaders. Small team governance may depend more on strong leadership and support from the principal than do other types of governance structure.

Shared Decision-making Between School-level Councils and Lead Agency Staff

The third form of school-level governance consisted of shared decision-making between the staff of the lead agency and a school-level council comprising representatives of the schools, local organizations and community residents. The push for community participation in planning and decision-making came from the cities themselves, the national intermediaries and the Funds. An assumption behind many community initiatives is that grass roots community buy-in and participation is an essential component in creating sustainable and well-used community resources. In addition, in the 1990s, the philanthropic and funding community was interested in strengthening the social ties among people and institutions in low-income communities. Each model in ESS emphasizes the importance of community involvement. For example, the Bridges to Success model requires community involvement in decision-making, especially parental involvement. According to a brochure published by the national intermediary, one Bridges principle is, "parents must have a significant role in governance at all levels of Bridges." A second principle is that the school-level councils are "the locus of control and structure for integrated child and family centers and services."

Since one of the goals of the initiative is to build local community support and engagement, the cities assigned to the school-level councils a variety of roles that would permit them to participate in meaningful ways. Councils could identify community and youth needs, thereby framing the kinds of programming that would be offered. They could read proposals for programs and approve or deny them. They could choose the lead agencies that would provide youth development activities. They could be involved in key staff decisions. In sum, the cities had high expectations and great enthusiasm for school-level community councils at the beginning of the ESS initiative:

> *In theory they should operate with the CBOs to approve programming plans developed by the CBOs. The CBOs should first go to them for program ideas.*
>
> —Fiscal Agency Staff

In keeping with the community-building agenda that motivated many of the local initiatives, cities hoped that the councils would become key partners in decision-making. They hoped that, ultimately, the councils would enhance school-community integration. Table 8.2 describes the sites' goals for their school-level councils in the four sites that attempted to implement them.

Table 8.2
Proposed Roles of the School-Level Councils

Role	Central Falls	Denver	Jacksonville	Savannah
Generate program goals	✔	✔	✔	✔
Approve program plans	✔			
Choose lead agencies		✔	✔	✔
Participate in staff decisions		✔		✔

Forming and convening councils proved to be one of the most challenging tasks in planning and early implementation. Here we briefly describe the experiences of the four cities that planned to hand some decision-making power over to school-level councils.

Forming School-Level Councils. The cities took two approaches to forming school-level councils for the ESS initiative: using pre-existing school management teams or creating teams from scratch. In two cities—Central Falls and Jacksonville—planning committee staff decided that it would be convenient to use school management teams already in place. In its efforts to increase accountability for educational performance, the state of Rhode Island law mandates that school improvement teams (SITs) meet to discuss issues such as the school curriculum. Florida's teams have a somewhat different agenda, since they are mandated by the state to manage the full-service schools portion of every school. As a result of their different functions, the composition of the school level councils differ in Jacksonville and Central Falls. Prior to implementation of the ESS initiative, the teams in Central Falls consisted primarily of teachers and school administrators. In Florida, in contrast, the teams consisted of school personnel and agencies that provide services in the school.

In two other cities—Denver and Savannah—both Beacons Adaptations, the school-level councils were formed by key planning team partners. In Denver, they organized presentations at community events and went door-to-door to find people who were interested. In Savannah, the planning team, which had extensive experience in community organizing by virtue of its experience in other community initiatives, hired community organizers in each of the three communities served by the selected schools. The organizers attended PTA and neighborhood association meetings, identified residents who were already involved in civic activities or those who expressed strong interest, and formed school-level councils. The groups also included teachers at the schools. In contrast to the school-level councils in Jacksonville and Central Falls, the councils in Denver and Savannah included more neighborhood residents and community activists. Neither approach, however, appeared better at attracting parents. Identifying and recruiting concerned parents proved as challenging in Denver and Savannah as in Jacksonville and Central Falls.

In three of the cities, the councils were very active early in implementation. In Denver, Savannah and Jacksonville, the school-level councils chose the community-based organizations charged with operating youth and adult after-school programs. The process by which each city did so differed somewhat. In Jacksonville, the Full-Service School teams formed a subcommittee that chose the CBO that managed after-school youth development activities at all five schools involved in the city's ESS initiative. In Denver, the planning committee vetted the list of organizations that applied to be lead agencies before passing them on to the school-level councils for final selection. The school-level councils, therefore, were presented only with proposals that had been reviewed by school district personnel and all the other oversight committee members. By all reports, the process in each city was—if not problem-free—satisfying to most.

The excitement turned to frustration, however, as tensions emerged between school-level councils, planning teams and lead agencies. The processes we observed in each of the cities were typical of those observed in initiatives in which resident involvement is externally imposed instead of emerging from community concerns.[14] Lack of consensus and clarity over roles and responsibilities over the first year led to tensions between groups of stakeholders, which resulted in precipitous declines in attendance at meetings in both Denver and Savannah. In Central Falls, where the School Improvement Teams (SITs) had functions that went well beyond the ESS Initiative, SITs rarely addressed ESS programs or concerns. Because of SITs' full agendas and school-year schedule, planning team members considered the SITs ill-prepared to function as decision-makers for the initiative. Examining what happened in these cities highlights how expectations and lines of accountability became entangled.

As implementation of the ESS programs got under way at the schools, events in two schools suggest that it may be crucial for councils to have ongoing and active support from the planning or oversight committee in mediating disputes between councils and lead agencies. In one school, the coordinator hired to run the program was very responsive to the council's requests, but did not follow guidelines set by the lead agency. Without consulting the council, the lead agency fired her. Ultimately, the agency's decision led to so much conflict that the agency agreed to step aside. In that case, the council prevailed. In another school, the council was dissatisfied with the performance of the coordinator who had been hired by the lead agency without consulting the council. Complicating matters were some racial concerns, since an increasing number of Latino residents was moving into the community, which had long been populated by African Americans. The lead agency primarily served the African American community, and the school-level council believed that the agency was not responsive to the Latino community. In that particular school, the coordinator was fired, and the council and lead agency compromised by having council members sit on the selection committee to hire a new coordinator. Two coordinators were ultimately hired—one was the lead agency's choice, the other was the council's choice. In both schools, key members of the planning team stepped forward to mediate the disputes and support the councils' authority.

Over the course of the first year of implementation, the authority of the school-level councils was called into question. When researchers visited the cities in the fall and winter of the first implementation year, the councils were still very much on people's minds as they spoke about governance, although even then it was clear that there were challenges in convening the councils. In one city, school coordinators informed the oversight committee that they wanted technical assistance in working with the school-level councils. By the summer, attention had turned away from the school-level councils, and oversight committee members did not know how effectively the councils were operating. Coordinators and council members at schools were vague in their responses to questions about how often the councils met. Across the cities, program decisions relating to activity choices, scheduling and staff were being made primarily by coordinators. At the end of the first full year of implementation, when asked in the organizational survey who would hold the ultimate authority if an "unresolvable issue concerning ESS were to arise," only four school coordinators included the school-level councils in their responses. Typically, coordinators reported that the organization controlling the funds or the oversight committees had ultimate authority. Council members reported that many members were no longer coming to meetings and that meetings were held infrequently. There was little question that ESS staff and their lead agencies were making decisions about programming.

Why it is so difficult to convene school-level councils for ESS. Across the cities, planning team members, coordinators and council members have a number of explanations for why it was so difficult to convene and support effective school-level councils. In a city where the school-level councils also oversaw school-day decisions, the councils' agendas were full and they lacked the time to oversee after-school activities. In addition, they did not meet during the summer, a prime time to plan fall activities. In one city, stakeholders suggested a range of explanations: the lead agencies lacked experience working with community councils and/or might not want to convene councils in communities in which they have poor relations; the local intermediary lacked adequate time to train the councils and clarify their roles; political infighting was par for the course in the local community; or the community had a history of noninvolvement.

Jacksonville: A Case of Successful Shared Decision-Making

Although the city did not avoid the tensions and conflicts we have described, Jacksonville was the only city that continued to actively use school-level councils. In Jacksonville, it is important to note, the councils were largely made up of community-based organization staff who were involved in the full-service schools. Thus, they had been managing activities at schools with a similarly complex collaborative structure. Although the councils had struggled with the tensions that those in other cities had, two factors appear to have allowed Jacksonville to overcome some of its difficulties. First, all services that come into the schools must be approved by the councils. The councils also have the authority to reallocate funding from one program to another. Their authority, therefore, arises from their role, and is not derived from the authority of the planning teams. Second, an overall culture of collaboration exists within the social service community in Jacksonville, which pre-disposed many stakeholders to work out their difficulties.

While all these explanations probably account for some of the difficulties, underlying organizational issues appear to have curtailed the development of school-level councils. In particular, the development of councils was ceded to the lead agencies; but as we have indicated, the lead agencies did not originally convene the groups. It was the planning teams that gave the councils power. Councils also had little control over funding. Their authority was further weakened by the fact that the staff who were on the lead agency's payroll to coordinate programs at the schools were responsible for convening meetings of the councils. As program implementation got off the ground and authority moved from the planning committees to the CBOs and school-level councils, the importance of the councils diminished. Lead agencies did not necessarily share the planning teams' fervent belief that school-level councils were an integral part of successful implementation.

Furthermore, formal agreements that articulated roles and responsibilities between the school-level councils and the lead agencies do not exist. If the lead agency does not follow the directions of the school-level council, the council has little strength to pressure it to do so. Contractual agreements are between the CBOs managing the programs and the fiscal agencies, not with the school-level councils. The school coordinators usually feel accountable to their lead agencies, which control the funds for the school programs. The community-based agencies, in turn, are ultimately accountable to the fiscal agencies. While the intention to include school-level councils in the initiative was real, structural support was not provided.

Moving to Alternative Management Structures

Given their difficulties in convening effective school-level councils, most schools in Denver, Savannah and Central Falls shifted their management strategies within the first year of implementation. In two cities, the school coordinators at the schools decided that the councils would probably be more effective as advisory councils. School coordinators and lead agency personnel were increasingly making the decisions in both cities.

The third city, Central Falls, moved to a more collaborative decision-making structure as the oversight committee—composed of partners from the schools, the United Way, community-based organizations, and a few parents and business people—took over decision-making for the after-school programs. Within the oversight committee, staff from key institutions—the schools and the United Way—seem to have been primarily responsible for decisions. Thus, the governance structure within the city began to look much like the small team structure typical of cities where only a single school is involved in the Adaptation. Table 8.3 describes the patterns of school-level management as the first year of implementation ended. It is important to emphasize that in several cases the local initiatives perceived their new strategies to be temporary. Central

Table 8.3
School-level Governance Structure at the End of the First Year of Implementation

Key partners oversee activities at schools	Lead agency staff share oversight with school-level councils	CBO/United Way provide oversight
Atlanta	Jacksonville	Minneapolis
Aurora		Missoula
Boston		Denver
Central Falls		Savannah
Long Beach		

Falls, for example, hoped an intensified effort to incorporate the school councils into the initiative would pay off. Long Beach, which had considerable success organizing community residents and parents to get involved in activities in the school, hoped that its efforts would eventually lead to increased community involvement in decision-making.

The City-wide Oversight Committees

In cities with multiple schools, the need to oversee programs across schools as well as within each school's program, becomes an issue. Therefore, early in implementation, oversight committees were created in four of the six multiple-school cities we visited: Central Falls, Denver, Minneapolis and Missoula. Typically, oversight committees consisted of administrators from local school districts, executive staff from lead agencies (in the Beacons) and other CBOs, the organization that served as the fiscal agent of the grant(s), the local intermediary (if there was one) and the United Way. In addition, in the models that included universities as key members, university staff were oversight committee members. Officials from local governments sat on the committees in four of the five cities. In three cities, residents and local business people also joined. The oversight committees ranged in size from 6 to 32 members.

All oversight committees have two core responsibilities: setting basic operating policies across the schools in each community and working toward sustaining the initiative at a city-wide level. In addition, most committees do trouble-shooting when problems arise at the school level, but the extent to which they oversee programs at the schools varies.

Setting Policies and Approving Budgets

One role of the oversight committees is to set policies and approve budgets for the school-based programs. To date, the policy-setting function has been relatively limited. As we noted in the previous chapter, early negotiations among key partners in some cities allowed the work to go forward during planning. However, Jacksonville, a city that did not form an oversight committee at the beginning of the initiative, decided to form one during the first year of implementation when it became obvious that some partners were displeased about having different personnel policies across the schools. The oversight committee was formed to set policy for the five schools involved in the initiative and to review budgets from each school. The city's experience, therefore, suggests that policy consistency across schools can be an outgrowth of an oversight committee.

Early Efforts Toward Sustainability

At the end of the first year of implementation, the work of sustaining the initiative was in its early development across the sites, and thus we expect that we will have more to report in the future. Nonetheless, the importance of the oversight committees in finding future funds bears commenting on. The use of public funds for extensive after-school efforts is in its infancy, and the cities involved in ESS are on the cutting edge of the after-school movement. Thus, the ESS cities are involved not only in identifying possible sources of public funds, but also in generating public interest and concern about after-school funds.

One advantage of having an oversight committee is that it often includes committed executives who make the time to lead and carry out efforts to identify potential sources of public funds and generate enthusiasm among politicians and government officials. School coordinators do not have the time to spend meeting with all the individuals needed to ensure a program's sustainability. Key oversight committee members involved in public fundraising efforts spend large amounts of time on these tasks, far more than they had expected. In Minneapolis, an effort to acquire state funding for after-school programs entailed visits to approximately 100 legislators and key executives in state government, including the commissioners of Health and Welfare, Corrections, and Family, Children and Learning.

The Trouble-Shooting Role

One of the roles that several oversight committees have taken in the first year is that of trouble-shooting when challenges arise, and mediating conflicts at the school level. This is particularly effective if the oversight committee membership includes senior school district staff along with senior CBO staff with sufficient influence and authority to intervene. Senior school district staff may, to some degree, encourage principal support when it lags. They can also explain the culture of the local school district to oversight committee members from CBOs or funding organizations. CBO staff and

Denver: Plans for Sustainability

In Denver, the oversight committee identified several key challenges to continuing Beacons funding. First, as in so many cities, the school district's mission is raising educational standards, and there is no funding available for the kinds of enrichment activity that the Beacons provide. Second, the city of Denver has a relatively young and small philanthropic base, and oversight committee members do not think there are sufficient private monies to fund the initiative long-term. Third, state funds for youth development activities are limited (as they are in so many states). Fourth, the Beacons in Denver need an institution that can act as the fiscal agent over the long term. The foundation that is currently filling the role is doing so temporarily.

The oversight committee has thus been considering creating a Board of Cooperative Educational Services [BOCES], which is often a partnership among a number of school districts that pool resources. In Denver, the BOCES would be a partnership between a university and Denver Public Schools (DPS) to govern all Denver's community/school projects—Beacons, 21st Century Learning Centers and neighborhood centers. Its advantages would be a primary concern with after-school activities and eligibility for funds that may not be available to another entity. For example, federal 21st CCLC funds must go to educational entities, but other funds may be limited to other kinds of agencies. A BOCES would allow the Denver Beacons to apply to multiple funding streams and funnel the funds of each to single entities.

funders can, in turn, put pressure on after-school program staff and their own organizations to negotiate with school-level councils or school staff.

In the first year, oversight committees found themselves stepping in to mediate conflicts over some contentious staffing decisions at the school level. In several schools, the school-level councils and the CBOs running the programs did not agree on the responsibilities or the performance of coordinators. The oversight committees mediated and helped identify solutions. Their role was important in facilitating management at the schools.

The Challenge of Decision-Making

Sites with oversight committees reported that a major challenge is deciding what the decision-making role of the committee is. In large (over 10 members) oversight committees with broad community representation, decision-making within the whole committee is difficult. The committees are not structured like typical governance boards of organizations. They do not have voting and nonvoting members, nor specific areas of authority over the organizations to which they provide advice and council. Instead, they are somewhere between advisory groups and decision-making groups. Staff from the ESS fiscal agencies, the school districts and local funders typically sit on the committees, and their opinions tend to carry more weight than do those of residents or other organizations. In one city, a staff person from a CBO involved in the initiative not in a key decision-making role noted:

> *I think they're feel-good meetings with a show and tell...We don't tackle problems or deal with sustainability issues...The agenda is set by a power structure outside of that committee.*

An executive of a fiscal agency in another city said:

> *The oversight committee has some individuals that disagree with everything, and so sometimes we'll say [to each other], "don't take that to the full oversight committee because they won't accept it." So what's interesting is the times and places we believe in democracy and the times we don't.*

To some degree, the challenges to the oversight committees are due to lack of clarity about their real authority. In all sites, it is the fiscal agencies that are ultimately accountable for meeting the grant requirements and they often push the agenda along. Typically, school district personnel are also key members of the decision-making structure, since without strong school district support the local initiatives could not operate. What we often observed was that a small group of executives makes decisions and the committees agree to them. One committee member from an organization that does not have key decision-making authority related how she had responded to a retreat planned by the oversight committee:

> *Someone gave the fiscal agency some money and said it should go to youth. So they said, "Let's do a youth retreat." We were just starting up. So [we had to] close down the program and go out into the country for three days. I don't think*

> *anybody felt like they had input into the retreat. That's not the timing we would have chosen.*

It appeared to us that the lack of role clarity is the basic problem, not the fact that decisions are made by a small number of individuals. People complained that they were told that they would have input into decisions, then found that they did not. This is a particular problem for executive staff from CBOs that provide activities in the after-school programs.

Conclusion

The transition from planning to implementation was challenging in many of the sites. Shifts in decision-making and management authority from the planning team to school-level governance structures and CBOs were particularly difficult. In general, two major factors contributed to the challenges of transferring authority: first, some of the school-level governance structures were unprepared to take on key decision-making tasks surrounding the ESS program at their school; and second, local governance teams and agency personnel who coordinated the ESS programs sometimes lacked clarity about their respective roles and responsibilities.

There are ways to establish after-school programs other than convening a group of administrators and executives from a range of organizations and creating several loci of authority. One could, for example, grant money to a well-established voluntary youth-serving organization that runs a number of programs (such as a YMCA) to oversee programs across a number of schools. One could also provide funds to schools themselves to administer (as the Department of Education does with its 21st Century Community Learning Center grants). One advantage of the former could be that planning and start-up periods are minimized, whereas an advantage of the latter is that school support and resources are likely to be more easily enlisted. Both also have potential disadvantages. Programs established by local youth-serving organizations may not interact effectively with school-day personnel. School-administered programs, on the other hand, might be limited in program content or "feel like school" to participating youth.

It is important to ask whether the multi-organizational structures of the local ESS initiatives had benefits that outweighed the costs. Although this report is based on only one year of implementation, and we are not yet prepared to address the question fully, the early information suggests that the complex structures had both advantages and disadvantages. In general, it appears that all the adaptation cities figured out ways to forge collaborations between schools and CBOs that were mutually beneficial.

All cities had to figure out how to manage activities at the school. They all hired school coordinators who had a wide range of day-to-day management responsibilities. School coordinators reported to one of three school-level governance structures that oversaw the program at the school and made key decisions. Some cities implemented school-level councils that shared decision-making with the lead agencies. In others, a small team of three to five key stakeholders, including the school's principal, oversaw the coordinator's work. In the rest, the lead agency oversaw the work.

Cities chose shared decision-making by a council and a lead agency because they hoped to increase the community's involvement in, and commitment to, both the ESS programs and the schools. In general, the council/lead agency configuration was effective in generating community interest in the initiative, especially in its early stages. On the other hand, the configuration proved difficult to sustain as the initiative progressed, and almost all the schools with this governance structure shifted to more heavy reliance on lead agency staff by the end of the first year of implementation.

In contrast, having lead agencies (as in the Beacon and Bridges cities) and small teams (as in one Bridges city, the Community Schools cities and the WEPIC cities) govern the programs proved to be effective for decision-making at the school level. Cities that had a single school involved in ESS used small teams to govern the local initiative. Unlike relations between lead agencies and school-level councils, the small governance teams tended to have relatively harmonious relationships. They also appeared to be effective in planning and implementing activities. Further, they included the principal in a close relationship with other partners and, as we discussed in Chapter V, having principal support is important for gaining the support of other school personnel. Both lead agency and small team governance, however, face potential barriers in working to sustain programs over the long term. The

members of small teams may lack experience in identifying and garnering public funds or the time to do so. For lead agencies, the challenge was somewhat different. In many, the ESS program was often one of many that the agency was implementing. As a result, the ESS program was competing for the lead agency's resources—both human and financial.

When cities had multiple schools involved in their local initiative, establishing oversight committees permitted them to more easily coordinate policies and activities across the schools. Because the cities with multiple ESS schools are the Bridges to Success and the Beacon models, oversight committees appeared only in those two model adaptations. The oversight committees are composed of executive and administrative staff from funding agencies, school districts, government agencies and CBOs. Having senior staff sit on the committees enhances the group's abilities to troubleshoot problems at the schools. It also proves useful in thinking about sustaining the initiative since the staff on the committees often has had experience in identifying funds.

To date, it appears that the various organizational structures do offer important advantages to the initiative. Small team governance, where principals are included on the team, strengthens school participation in the local initiative, which may serve to create and sustain strongly integrated school community partnerships. Oversight committees provide important human resources to the initiative; to date, the committees have found solutions to specific problems in the school programs. Perhaps more importantly, in thinking about how to sustain their work, the oversight committees are considering how to access public funding. Identifying and getting public funds is an ambitious undertaking, and the oversight committees are more likely to have the resources to commit than are other groups.

The Funds anticipated the challenge and therefore contracted with the Finance Project, a national organization with expertise in financing supports and services for children, youth and families. The role of the Finance Project is to build capacity and knowledge in the field around funding after-school programs and to provide technical assistance to sites to develop strategies for future funding. A key challenge for the cities will be to sustain their local initiative beyond the grant period. The evaluation's final report will examine the cities' strategies and experiences in sustainability. In doing so, it will describe if and how different governance structures affected strategies for, and success in, sustaining the local initiatives.

IX. Summary and Conclusions

Keeping schools open longer and expanding the uses of buildings makes sense. Transforming school facilities into youth and community centers expands the public benefit derived from investment in these public buildings. The potential benefits are especially great for children and youth. Before- and after-school programs provide young people with opportunities to develop the skills, roles and relationships essential to their ultimate success, as well as shelter them during a time of vulnerability. As a result, many of the newly emerging after-school programs are in schools.

Locating such programs in schools is particularly sensible in low-income communities because there are few other available resources that children and their parents can use for educational and recreational purposes. The ESS Initiative, which funds close to 60 programs, was designed to explore how school-based programs could be implemented in low-income neighborhoods, who would be served and how. The initiative encompasses a wide variety of after-school programs adapting to a wide variety of poor urban environments. By examining the experiences of these diverse programs, the evaluation aimed to learn about the issues involved in providing children and youth with enriching opportunities in a school setting outside traditional school hours.

Approximately one year after the programs had begun operating, we found that thousands of low-income children across ESS's 17 cities had enrolled in the programs, which offer participants a wide range of activities—academic, enrichment, athletic, creative and cultural. During the school year, stress is placed on academics, with approximately 40 percent of activity hours devoted to skill-building and academic enrichment; during the summer, offerings are more evenly distributed.

The Adaptation Process

The ESS initiative involves four distinct program models, each with its own program philosophy and underlying beliefs about how youth best develop. All four models reflect the public's deep concern about academic achievement. The evaluation has allowed us to observe how cities modify the basic model programs to fit their particular social, cultural and political contexts. We expected these adaptations to take a number of forms. They could, for example, lead to modifications in governance structures or in the roles of school

personnel, or to adjustments in programmatic emphases in order to target a specific community issue.

Over the first year of operation, we observed that, along some dimensions, programs adapting different models tended to be similar. First, all the programs put similar and heavy emphasis during the school year on academics and other enrichment opportunities but lightened those emphases during the summer. Second, school-level governance structures seem to have converged somewhat: over time, multiple-school cities all developed city-level oversight committees and began to vest management authority more with the lead agencies rather than with school-level councils. Third, a core staffing pattern seems to be emerging. All the programs came to see the need for a full-time school coordinator. For the programs operating before and during school, most also have gravitated towards hiring an assistant. Thus, it appears that the core demands of operating an ESS program are leading most of the adaptation programs to similar types of programming, staffing and governance, at least in the early stage of operations.

Model differences, however, still remain. The Beacon philosophy of developing the whole child distributes its programming across developmental areas suffering more cultural and athletic activities. Consistent with its goal of creating seamless school and nonschool environments, Community School adaptations are viewed by principals as a more integral part of the school than is true in the other programs. The United Way, national and local, brought to the Bridges cities a greater stress on partnership and consensus. Relative to their funding levels, they are able to bring more outside providers into the school than are other models. Though many of the WEPIC adaptation cities had not yet become fully operational, these programs seem to stress community service to a much greater degree than do the other models.

It will be interesting over the next year or two to observe whether the adaptation programs continue to converge. The models' convergence may be a short-term effect of getting the programs off the ground. As the programs mature, model difference may assert themselves more strongly. It will also be interesting to see whether there are variations across models with respect to youth experiences. Answers to both questions will help locales that are thinking about implementing similar after-school programs choose a model. If, ultimately, the programs converge until they appear interchangeable on key dimensions such as collaborations with schools, programming, youth recruitment and sustainability, then it may not matter which model a community begins with. If, on the other hand, one model is more successful than another in achieving specific goals, then communities may want to choose a model that complements the community's goals for the program. One obvious example of this would be that the oversight committee structures of the Bridges to Success or Beacon models appear to be particularly fitting when communities want to involve multiple schools and need to consider how they will set policies that will be applied across schools. Similarly, if local stakeholders have strong school support for a program that entails close partnership between schools and CBOs and hope to integrate school and out-of-school activities, then a Community School model may be desirable. In cities where trust between CBOs and schools is low, then the Community School model may prove very challenging to implement.

Using Schools as the Venue for After-school Programs

Location in the school building provides a program with several important advantages. First, the facilities are appropriate for a wide range of activities. Gyms, libraries, auditoriums and computer labs all provide unique equipment and space difficult to find elsewhere. Second, the school provides coordinators with ready access to potential participants, namely the student body. Third, the school offers the program legitimacy; parents might hesitate to allow their children to participate in programs elsewhere.

But using schools as a venue for after-school programs is not as easy as it would appear—and for several concrete reasons. First, the current notion that school buildings are underused resources, open for only six or seven hours during the school day and not at all in the summer, is too simplistic. We observed that at least some parts of the schools are often heavily used after hours: teachers prepare for their next day's classes and provide extra help to selected students; students use the libraries and computer labs to complete their assignments; sport teams practice; outside organizations—such as Scouts or private day-care providers—use the facilities. Even in the summers, the buildings are used, primarily for summer school programs that have

become much more prevalent in reaction to the current movement to improve academic achievement. The result is that ESS programs often have to compete for prime space, such as the gym or computer labs.

Second, limited resources for maintaining the school's physical facilities and equipment also lead administrators to limit the building's use. Anything depreciates with use—cars, equipment, schools. For the most part, coordinators are able to keep the rate of facility deterioration down to the usual school-day strain, but when facilities and equipment are used, they wear out and break. Given the tight budgets that the principals in this study operate under, it is not surprising that there is tension between schools and ESS coordinators around the use of the building, student behavior and custodial issues. Breakage means that school-day students, as well as after-school participants, have to do with less. Having to buy or repair a computer means that some other purchase has to be foregone. Tensions are often perceived by program staff as created by school distrust of the program, but our investigation reveals that the fundamental issue is not one of turf or control, but of resources. More public funds are needed to maintain school facilities if they are to be open for longer hours and used more intensively. Turf and control issues do arise, but can be resolved over time as trust builds; the resource issue will not go away without the public's greater awareness and support.

Third, using schools as the venue for after-school programs accentuates the challenge of transportation and increases program cost. Although more cities across America are turning their elementary and middle schools back into neighborhood schools as efforts to integrate urban schools through busing are abandoned, a significant number of youth in the ESS cities are still bused to and from their schools. Busing was used not only for integration but also to bring children to school buildings in neighborhoods where few live. Many of the coordinators with whom we spoke expressed both frustration with the difficulties of recruiting bused students to the program, getting youth home from after-school activities and arranging transportation for field trips. If schools provide busing for students who stay after hours for sports, the after-school program has to schedule activities to coordinate with the late bus's schedule. In schools that do not have late buses, the programs can serve only youth who live within walking distance or whose parents can pick them up. Relying on parentally provided transportation is a serious barrier for the most economically disadvantaged youth, whose parents do not have cars or who work second shift jobs.

As cities think about how to implement school-based after-school programs, the implications of various transportation options need to be weighed. Buses can transport youth from the after-school program to their homes; or the school-based after-school programs can act like a neighborhood center and recruit only neighborhood youth, including those who do not attend the given school. The two options have both advantages and disadvantages. Recruiting is easier if the target population goes to the school in which the program is held. Parents and children are familiar and comfortable with the building, and recruitment can be done during the school day. But paying for transportation is expensive. Even if resources (in kind or financial) exist to pay for transportation, the program's costs rise. To be a prudent investment, then, the benefits of the program need to be greater if they are to outweigh the true costs. On the other hand, programs targeting only neighborhood youth significantly diminish transportation problems and the cost of the program, but school personnel are less likely to be as supportive; we observed that both teachers and principals are most invested in meeting *their* students' needs. Also, neighborhood-based programs are likely to have difficulty recruiting children who do not go to the school. There also may be tension between the two groups of youth.

Fourth, preliminary data suggest that while the programs reach thousands of children who live in very disadvantaged circumstances, effort is needed to draw the most disadvantaged students into school-based after-school programs. School coordinators indicated that their programs are less successful recruiting children who are behind in school, poor attenders, prone toward detention, lacking support at home, and from non-English-speaking and poor families. Transportation, the difficulty of contacting parents and the students' own dislike of school are barriers the programs need to address.

Realistic Expectations for After-school Programs

Although we did not formally consider the impact of the programs on the lives of their participants (subsequent work will examine youth's experiences in the programs), the information gathered for this report enables us to speculate on the types of impact after-school programs similar to ESS will have. As often happens with promising, new interventions, people have very high and broad aspirations for after-school programs. Some hope that they will keep children safe and provide them with basic skills they will need to succeed in school and as adults—such as social competence, anger management, persistence, responsibility, leadership, entrepreneurship and civic engagement. Still others hope they will reduce neighborhood crime and increase schools' and children's ability to achieve higher academic standards.

Academic activities are a substantial part of all the programs, regardless of which model is being adapted. The relative importance of academics in these after-school programs is very much in line with the tremendous stress being placed on increased standards and student performance across the country. The ESS programs provide both academic support (homework help, tutoring and enrichment classes) and non-academic activities. Both types of activity have potential to improve student performance: academic support directly expands children's learning opportunities, while nonacademic activities help meet some of their other needs, enabling them to be more attentive learners during the school day.

Yet, obtaining academic impacts will be an uphill battle for the programs. First, many have opted to serve more children less intensively (programming one or two days a week for each age group) rather than fewer children more intensively (three to five days a week). Second, mobility is quite high in these low-income neighborhoods and many of the enrollees leave the program too soon to benefit. Third, even if the program does intensively serve its participants, it is unlikely that, at their current levels of funding, they will increase a school's test scores dramatically; the proportion of students in a school who attend these programs is now relatively small. Performance could improve for individual participants who come frequently, but this may not help the principal whose job depends on the school's aggregate performance. However, if academic impacts can be demonstrated at least among those who attend, additional funding may be forthcoming, enabling the programs to expand and serve more children and youth more intensively.

Similarly, ESS's effect on crime, though likely positive, is not likely to live up to advocates' dreams. Most juvenile crime is committed by older youth, who, as we saw, are less likely to attend after-school programs. Second, the youth who are most likely committing crimes are not staying after school to attend these programs. School coordinators consistently reported that they were not reaching the most at-risk students. While part of the low turnout among higher-risk youth may be attributable to school location, more fundamentally, youth's participation in most forms of organized activity decreases as they age. Thus, more serious crime is unlikely to decrease significantly as a result of ESS-like after-school programs. Delinquency and vandalism, however, may decline because they are perpetrated by younger children. In fact, several principals mentioned lower rates of vandalism since their ESS program had begun. In addition, by providing the children with a supervised after-school environment, rates of youth victimization may also drop.

The after-school programs we observed did actively attract and engage thousands of children and youth who have few other positive options for filling their after-school time. Our next report will examine more specifically students' participation patterns and their experiences in programs. So far, we have observed students engaged in a wide variety of activities—art and science classes, tae-bo, basketball, leadership training, career awareness activities, community service, behavior and etiquette classes. The students we spoke with enjoy the programs and are often quite attached to staff. Thus, we speculate that programs are providing frequent participants with meaningful adult relationships, opportunities to interact with their peers, and the chance to learn new skills and refine old ones. In the next report, we will try to measure these benefits.

Conclusions

School-based after-school programs are promising strategies for engaging youth and children in a variety of positive social, recreational and academic activities. Policymakers and funders, however, must balance optimism about their potential with some degree of caution. The programs face very real challenges in finding adequate resources—especially the space needed to house them and the transportation needed by participants.

Expectations for the programs should also be tempered by grounded knowledge about what youth programs can and cannot achieve. Although there is relatively little information available to date about the effects of school-based after-school programs, research on effective youth activities tells us what effects can be achieved and under what circumstances. We can therefore expect that well-run after-school programs can have a positive impact on youth's lives by giving youth more opportunities to socialize with peers in a safe setting, form relationships with nonparental adults, and engage in interesting and new activities. If expectations are too high, however, then the inability of the programs to reach them could undermine the public's support for programs that achieve significant goals.

We have long known that children and youth need to have access to developmental opportunities over the course of their childhood and adolescence. Ongoing support makes a difference. Because schools are inherently developmental, they meet children and youth where they are and, through a series of increasingly challenging activities, encourage young people to reach higher levels of achievement. Locating after-school programs in schools may encourage youth programs to emphasize the importance of stretching youth. Youth development programs in schools may also have an impact on schools and their staff. They may facilitate school staff's ability to see other dimensions of and talents in students. They may also enhance the academic curriculum with other developmental opportunities that teachers may lack the time to provide.

Preview of the Future

The purpose of this report has been to provide the field with an understanding of the challenges new community school initiatives are likely to face during their first year and to explore some of the strategies ESS programs use to address them. The report documents sites' critical use of creativity, patience, careful communication and persistence in the ways they carried out these strategies. Now entering their third year, ESS programs are at a new stage of development—a stage that reflects the utility of their early strategies and that is marked by an increasing focus on the issue of sustainability.

The growing ease and reciprocity in relationships shared by schools and ESS program staff surfaces as one of the most prominent developments across sites. In their first year, sites identified ESS-school relationships as awkward and stated particular difficulty in negotiating the sharing of school space; the five sites we visited in our most recent round of interviews reported significant improvements. Most principals were pleased with the level of communication they had with site directors and youth coordinators, and two said that they considered ESS staff to be school staff. As a part of this privileged insider status, ESS staff are invited to attend and make announcements at all school faculty meetings. ESS staff reported positively on what they experienced as a greater feeling of welcome in schools and they persisted in developing improved ways of keeping school staff abreast of their program offerings and programming needs. Two coordinators we recently spoke with were posting school-wide email announcements and a third coordinator posts a room sign-up sheet so that teachers may read through her list of room needs for the month and, if willing, volunteer their classroom space. In one case teachers volunteered the use of the teachers' lounge.

Sites present examples of progress in other areas as well. A middle school program in Minneapolis has developed a strategy to secure the participation of more high-risk youth: rather than recruit youth through a first-come first-served system that risks including only youth with parents who return forms promptly, the coordinator keeps enrollment open for two weeks and then does a random drawing to select participants.

In an effort to meet the challenge of attracting older youth participants, the coordinator of a high school program in Missoula offers what has emerged as a tremendously popular ski club. With over 120 participants in this activity alone, the coordinator has been able to capitalize on the "cool" effect of having a well-known and well-liked activity on which she can build participation in other activities. Missoula is also the

first site to address the challenge of limited transportation options by making arrangements for youth to use public city buses. In one of the middle schools, an adult crossing guard is paid to walk groups of youth to a nearby bus stop after school and wait with them until the bus arrives.

Parent and community involvement has been another common challenge. To generate participation from these groups, a middle school in Aurora, Colorado, plans large family celebration events twice a year. The events bring families into the school and honour ESS youth participants by holding a special dinner, presenting them with awards and showcasing their new skills through performances and art displays. At their Spring 2000 celebration, the site had over 200 people in attendance and gave away dozens of donated door prizes' that ranged from a free night's stay at an upscale downtown hotel to haircuts at a local salon.

As sites' accomplishments continue to grow, it is important to recognize that ESS programs are still developing. This means that even once they master a series of challenges, more await them. Yet at this early stage, programs display the signs of mature initiatives. Looking across the composite of sites for examples, signs of success include programs with a diverse and regular menu of activities, a name broadly recognized within the school and community, accepted and increasingly integrated involvement within schools, expanded and strengthened partnership networks, effective governance structures with clearly defined and authentic roles, and staffing structures that are comprehensive enough to meet sites' work demands and stable enough to weather occasional staff turnover. In our next report we will be looking more intensively at the strategies programs are using to address perhaps their most challenging goal, achieving sustainability.

Endnotes

1. The initiative is referred to either as the Extended Service Schools Adaptation Initiative or just ESS. We will use ESS in this report, but the reader should keep in mind that all the cities are adapting and modifying the models to their local circumstances.

2. Implementation funding was available as of January 1998. However, most programs did not begin fully operating until Fall 1998.

3. In a survey of school coordinators, the researchers requested information about pre-existing programs within the schools; but because the coordinators were hired for the Adaptation, their knowledge of pre-existing programs was sometimes limited. We also requested such information from principals, but since so many were new, *their* knowledge was limited as well.

4. The purpose of our observations was to pilot an assessment form that we plan to use later in the research and thus we selected half the sites to observe activities.

5. All names are pseudonyms.

6. Five cities—Boston, Central Falls, Rhode Island, Minneapolis and Savannah—were chosen to participate in the most intensive research activities, including the cost, youth participation and youth experience studies. A sixth city, Aurora, Colorado, joined the cohort in late 1999 but had not yet begun the process of collecting data from participants for the research.

7. Because these five cities are part of the participation and youth experience studies, parents of enrollees fill out a short intake form to provide us with more information on the children.

8. Quoted in *Combining Service and Learning: A Resource Book for Community and Public Service*, Volume II, Jane C. Kendall and Associates (ed.). National Society for Internships and Experiential Education: Raleigh, N.C., 1990, p.425.

9. *Issue Brief: Schools Serving Family Needs: Extended-day Programs in Public and Private Schools*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, February 1997.

10. One factor pushing principals to value activities that are not academically oriented is the pressure on principals to increase the academic content of the school day to the exclusion of enrichment activities such as the visual and performing arts. This is a particularly acute problem in Minneapolis because the state of Minnesota has mandated that schools address youth's other developmental needs in addition to their academic needs. At the same time, Minneapolis Public Schools had increased academic performance standards. Some principals find themselves caught in a bind: reducing enrichment activities means they are not addressing the state's youth development mandate, but not reducing them means they cannot allocate more time to academics.

11. The remaining motivations came primarily from grant writers or consultants who were paid to be involved.

12. Community Education staff did not necessarily agree with this perspective. Some staff members told us that Community Education was doing youth development prior to the Beacon Initiative, but they had been doing so through specific programs instead of through an active community school partnership. Others told us that Community Education was doing exactly what the Beacons hoped to do, but the ESS initiative brought greater resources to its efforts.

13. The WEPIC grants were structured differently from the grants provided to the other models. WEPIC cities did not receive a planning grant, and thus we visited Atlanta at an earlier stage in its development than we visited other cities.

14. The proportion of high school students eligible for free and reduced lunch is significantly lower in the communities, probably because high schools tend to be larger and more economically diverse than are elementary or middle schools.

15. See Walker et al. (1999) for a description of the developmental phases of resident councils in externally organized community initiatives.

References

Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development
1992 *A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Non-School Hours*. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Clark, Reginald
1983 *Family Life and School Achievement*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dryfoos, Joy G.
1998 *Safe Passage: Making It Through Adolescence in a Risky Society*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Furstenberg, Frank F. Jr., Thomas D. Cook, Jacquelynne Eccles, Glenn H. Elder, Jr., and Arnold Sameroff.
1999 *Managing to Make It: Urban Families and Adolescent Success*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gambone, Michelle Alberti, and Amy J. A. Arbreton
1997 *Safe Havens: The Contributions of Youth Organizations to Health Adolescent Development*. Philadelphia: Public Private Ventures.

Kotloff, Lauren J., Phoebe A. Roaf, and Michelle Alberti Gambone
1995 *The Plain Talk Planning Year: Mobilizing Communities to Change*. Philadelphia: Public Private Ventures.

Melaville, Atelia
1998 *Learning Together:* [Jean, need rest of cite]

Pittman, Karen J., and Michele Cahill
1992 *Youth and Caring: The Role of Youth Programs in the Development of Caring*. Commissioned Paper No. 6. Washington, D.C.: Academy for Educational Development, Center for Youth Development.

Tierney, Joseph P., and Jean Baldwin Grossman
1995 *Making a Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers Big Sisters*. Philadelphia: Public Private Ventures.

Walker, Karen E., Bernardine H. Watson, and Linda Z. Jucovy
1999 *Resident Involvement in Community Change: The Experiences of Two Initiatives*. Philadelphia: Public Private Ventures

Warren, Constance, with Prudence Brown and Nicholas Freudenberg
1996 *Evaluation of the New York City Beacons: Phase I Findings*. Washington, D.C.: Academy for Educational Development, with Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago; and Hunter College Center on AIDS, Drugs and Community Health in New York.

Werner, Emmy, and Ruth Smith
1992 *Kids: Overcoming the Odds: High Risk Children from Birth to Adulthood*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

Wilson, William Julius
1987 *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.